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ABSTRACT

This resource manual was developed for educators responsible for teaching grades 4, 5, 6, and beyond, concentrating on student literacy as it relates to written language. The manual focuses on helping educators apply a specific instructional strategy that is related to student needs identified in the "Writing Skill Arrays" and skills assessed by the writing components, multiple-choice and essay of the High School Proficiency Test (HSPT). The manual is intended to enable educators to identify resources to implement solutions that address student and staff development needs in the areas identified on the HSPT. Topics in Section 1, "Developing Literacy," include: Defining Literacy; Sources of Literacy; Background; Literacy: An Active Process for Instruction; Cognitive Objectives and the Writing Task; Writing as a Higher Order Thinking Skill; Educational Implication of the Relationship; and Three Phases of Language Learning. Topics in section 2, "Instructional Strategies Related to the Skill Array and Multiple-Choice Section of the HSPT," include: General Teaching Guidelines; Cluster I: Sentence Structure/Construction; Cluster II: Organization of Ideas; and Cluster III: Editing. Section 3, "Instructional Strategies Related to the Skill Array and the Essay Section of the HSPT Writing Test," contains sections on: General Teaching Guidelines; Organization/Content; Sentence Structure/Construction; Revising; and Editing. Appendixes make up about half the document and include: "Skill Array: Benchmark Skills"; a report on writing skills assessment on the ninth grade HSPT; two papers on Teaching--Learning--Assessing and Dictation: An Instructional Strategy for Editing; some examples of basic text structures; a set of pointers called A Writer's Reflection on the Writing Process and a glossary of terms. (MG)

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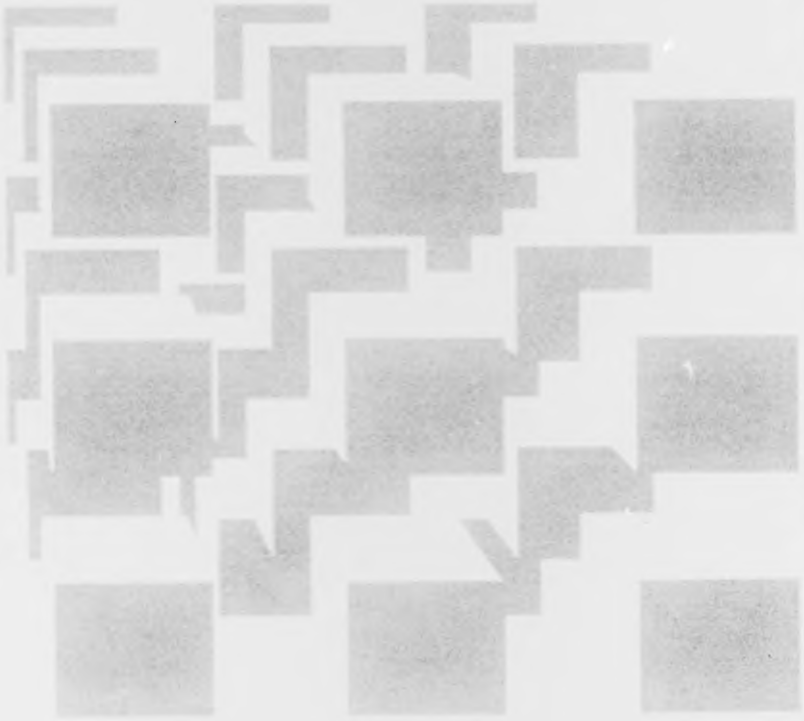
DEVELOPING LITERACY

Grades 4 - 6 and Beyond



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CS 212 652

DEVELOPING LITERACY:

GRADES 4-6 AND BEYOND

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FOREWORD

Illiteracy is a problem that is common to all countries, whether they are prosperous, emerging, or underdeveloped. In 1985 (the most recent year for which statistical data is available), the U. S. Department of Education reported that over 20 million (or 11 percent) of 180 million adult Americans are illiterate -- unable to read or write. Although other estimates are higher, indicating an even higher rate of illiteracy, these numbers, nevertheless, send a clear message: illiteracy is a debilitating problem for a sizeable segment of our society and country.

New Jersey must commit to and focus the attention of its educators on preventative measures that can affect the literacy of our students as they pass through their developmental elementary and secondary school years. Only when we concentrate on producing literate students do we achieve literate adults. During the past decade, New Jersey has moved beyond awareness to action with the development and administration of the High School Proficiency Test (HSPT) as a high school graduation requirement, the research and development of related instructional materials and documents, and the provision of teacher-training in-service through regional curriculum service units. These activities and materials are designed to assure that the state's children are literate.

This product, Developing Literacy, is targeted for educators responsible for teaching grades four through six and beyond. The focus of this document is on the Skill Array Benchmark Skills at these grades and on these same skills assessed on the High School Proficiency Test at grade nine.

John Ellis
Commissioner

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
I. Developing Literacy	1
Defining Literacy	1
Sources of Literacy	2
Background	3
Literacy: An Active Process for Instruction	5
Cognitive Objectives and the Writing Task	7
Writing As A Higher-Order Thinking Skill	8
Educational Implications of the Relationship	9
Three Phases of Language Learning	10
II. Instructional Strategies Related to the Skill Array and Multiple-Choice Section of the HSPT	13
General Teaching Guidelines	13
Cluster I: Sentence Structure/Construction	14
Cluster II: Organization of Ideas	18
Cluster III: Editing	21
III. Instructional Strategies Related to the Skill Array and the Essay Section of the HSPT Writing Test	23
General Teaching Guidelines	23
Organization/Content	28
Sentence Structure/Construction	33
Revising	36
Editing	38
Appendices	39
A. Skill Array: Benchmark Skills	39
B. Writing Skills Assessed on the Ninth Grade HSPT	45
C. Teaching - Learning - Assessing	57
D. Dictation: An Instructional Strategy for Editing	69
E. Examples of Basic Text Structures	75
F. A Writer's Reflection on the Writing Process	81
Glossary	89
Bibliography	97
Documents Published by NJSDE	101
Regional Curriculum Service Units	103
Feedback Form	105

DEVELOPING LITERACY

PURPOSE

This resource book is developed for use by teachers, supervisors, and administrators who are responsible for developing student literacy as it relates to written language at grades four, five, six, and beyond. The document is written to help educators apply a specific instructional strategy that is related to student needs identified in the Writing Skill Arrays (Appendix A: Primary/Intermediate Benchmark Skills) and skills assessed by the writing components, multiple-choice and essay, of the High School Proficiency Test (HSPT). This document is intended to enable educators to identify resources in order to implement solutions that address student and staff development needs in the areas identified on the HSPT (Appendix B). Since the HSPT is a graduation requirement, it is necessary to understand that these skills are cumulative and reflect instruction in skill areas considered important to student literacy as a result of language instruction begun in the early grades. Language instruction, although formally introduced to students in their primary years, is developed, assessed, and reinforced throughout all grades.

Underlying the instructional approach conveyed in this document is recognition of both the cognitive (writing is a higher-order thinking skill) and the social (language is audience-oriented) aspects inherent in the development of the writing skills assessed on the HSPT. All of the instructional strategies have been constructed specifically to address the writing components of the examination, including the skills identified as "benchmark skills" in the Writing Skill Array, as well as to cover a wide variety of instructional needs. If a section or strategy does not apply, please pass over it, and use only those sections or items that apply to you and your students.

DEFINING LITERACY

Although literacy is usually characterized as reading and writing, it also may include listening and speaking. These functions of language are measured in terms of the value and level of language proficiency demanded by society of its citizenry to cope and to contribute in a social, economical, political, and technical world.

Literacy, as a concept, is a social phenomenon because language is social -- writers assume they have readers, and speakers assume they have listeners. This assumption is due to the interrelatedness of language. Instructionally, the implications of perceiving language as a social event are far-reaching. For many, the desire to communicate and receive information provides an incentive for using language, whether it is language that is "listened to," "spoken," "read," or "written".

Early development of the knowledge and understanding required for language use comes from an individual's experience in talking and learning about the world and talking and learning about written language. By the time the first words are uttered, a child has a good understanding of what language

is for -- in other words, how language functions in human interaction (Halliday, 1975). Learning about language involves learning about language as a system, that is, learning how to produce meaning in a variety of contexts. Literacy is not a state one enters, but rather involves an individual's refinement of the components of language as contexts change and evolve. In other words, the ability of individuals to read and write can be interpreted differently in various contexts so that literacy for high school graduates is quite different from literacy for immigrants.

SOURCES OF LITERACY

> **Writing must be seen as part of a child's general language development and not as discrete skills isolated from listening, speaking, and reading.** (Adapted from NIE, 1985 Report of the Commission on Reading)

Home Environment

> **A parent is a child's first tutor in unraveling the fascinating puzzle of written language.** (NIE, 1985, p. 27)

Language begins in the home. The way in which parents talk to their children about life experiences influences what knowledge children will gain from the experience and their later ability to draw on the knowledge when writing and/or reading. In addition to reinforcing student interest in written language (letters, drawings, and words), it is also important that parents find time to read aloud to their children. Reading aloud builds the knowledge and interest required for eventual success in writing and/or reading. In other words, parents or guardians play roles of inestimable importance in laying the foundation for learning the use and derivatives of language in acts of writing, reading, speaking, and listening.

Pre-School Environment

> **Children develop competence in the socio-cultural practice of writing through the internalization of social relationships, that is, children internalize the structure of the activities involving writing which they experience in their environment.** (Gundlach, et al. 1985, p. 24)

Children who have gone on trips to parks, museums, and zoos, etc., have more background knowledge relevant to school success in language literacy then children who have not. That is why it is important for the school to provide opportunities for students to have first-hand experiences.

Early development of the knowledge required for language use comes from children's experience talking and learning about the world and talking, reading, and learning about written language. According to Teale (1984), "growth into literacy is characterized by a child's development of assumptions and knowledge about written language and attitudes toward the

reading-writing activity itself" (p. 115). Thus, the preschool environment must provide the necessary structure for the experiences children encounter in their immediate environment.

School Environment

> **Young children are written language users and learners long before their writing looks representational.** (Harste, Woodward, & Burke, 1984, p. 15)

Teachers who are successful at promoting student literacy have classes that motivate and are best described as having an atmosphere that is business-like, but supportive and friendly. Within this school setting, the teacher engages the student in learning that writing is always directed toward the construction of meaning. The teacher introduces skills; guides practice; provides feedback and correctives, as well as independent work; and systematically reviews both "new" and "old" skills, knowledge, and strategies. However, in addition to the teacher, parents must still retain an active and supportive role to both child and school. In other words, parents can continue to influence children's language use by monitoring school performance, providing support for homework, and, most important, continuing personal involvement with their children's growth as language users.

Conclusion

> **"...never to underestimate children as learners. If very young learners can informally direct their own progress and use what they have learned to gain control of what they are learning, the least each of us can do is to keep alive in classrooms the meaning inherent in oral and written language interaction...."** (Baghban, 1984, p. 105-106)

For a student to develop literacy, writing needs to be recognized as exploratory, reading and writing as mutually supportive within instructional settings, and representational writing (a child's carefully formed scrawls) as preceding reading in the natural order of learning (Bennett, 1986). According to Chomsky, "...the written word grows out of children's consciousness and belongs to them. True preparation for reading is in making their own productions before they are expected to read other people's productions" (Chomsky, 1971). In other words, students will use language when they have been allowed time and opportunity to develop expectancies for the form and function of their own products. For children of all ages, those products may be oral, drawn, read, and/or written. What is important to childrens' literacy development is their perception, attitude, and internalization of these activities in collaboration with the experiences in their environment.

BACKGROUND

The latest federal report, Becoming A Nation of Readers (NIE, 1985), provides us with evidence that serious deficiencies exist in our public school

curriculum, especially in the uses of language. It is unfortunate that every recent analysis of writing instruction in American classrooms has reached the same conclusion: Children do not get many opportunities to write (NIE, 1985). In studies that spanned the developmental years of the elementary grades (Graves, 1978) and secondary years (Applebee, 1981; 1984), only 15 percent of the school day was spent in any kind of sustained writing activity. Two-thirds of the writing that did occur was word-for-word copying in workbooks rather than sustained written communication representative of students' direct command of written language. Studying results from elementary school programs, Petty and Finn (1981) reported writing resembling punctuation and capitalization exercises in their study of writing program activities and practices in grades 1-8 (p. 23).

All of the uses of language - listening, speaking, reading, and writing - are interrelated and mutually supportive. It follows, therefore, that school activities that foster one of the language arts inevitably will benefit the others as well. Since opportunities to write have been found to contribute to knowledge of how written and oral language are related and to growth in phonics, spelling, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension, teachers need to provide students with time and opportunity to write (Calkins, 1983). In addition, students as writers must know the "how and why" of writing in order to write. Students who learn to write need both guidance and instruction from their teacher.

The process of developing written literacy is part of a historical lineage which leads from speech through imaginative play and drawing, and then to writing (Vygotsky, 1978). In fact, according to Harste, Woodward, and Burke (1984), "Young children are written languages users and learners long before their writing is representational" (p. 15). The act long proceeds the understanding. Later, as children progress through the grades, they gain more control over the physical act of writing. It is writing at these developmental grades, fourth through sixth, that needs to become more integral to curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Research on writing and the results of two years of testing to measure cumulative attainment of these skills inform us that for children to be at the skill mastery level examined at the ninth grade, the following skills and activities need to occur in grades four, five, and six and beyond.

<u>Writing needs to be recognized as a tool of communication that is learned through a recursive process</u>.

- Writing is edited speech, and every writer is faced with the task of reorganizing spoken language into written forms. Translated into instructional strategies, the student needs to learn that writing is a recursive process requiring student participation in the following five elements of the composing process:

  prewriting
  drafting
  revising
  editing
  post-writing

Teachers need to understand that students will develop literacy when they learn the principles of oral and written communication.

- Writing and speaking are forms of language requiring different instruction. Instructionally, this means that students need to recognize that "what I can say I can write", but that speech has its own vocabulary. Spoken language permits the use of "half-sentences" and flows from one idea to another without a plan or outline. Writing is almost always the contrary, with "complete" sentences and thought structure. Instruction needs to focus on helping students learn "how" to write using elements that are characteristic of quality writing, such as: content/organization, sentence construction, usage, and mechanics.

Students' emergence into developed literacy is dependent upon quality instruction and teacher guidance. Teachers need to be informed and taught "how" to teach writing to their students.

- Writing, inaccurately referred to as "creative writing," does not merely flow from a person as a result of stimulation. The writer must know the "how and why" of writing in order to create or write. Although it is acknowledged there are those who have the ability to create with words, learning to write comes from teacher guidance and the writer's self. The writer needs to know what he/she knows and be able to defend it. Beginning with the primary grades and continuing in grades four through six and beyond, teachers must become familiar with strategies for teaching:

  - prewriting and drafting
  - organizational schemes
  - sentence construction (meaning units written in sentence form)
  - proofreading and revision
  - self-editing (conventions/mechanics of standard edited English)

Writing is a tool of communication: a fundamental tool for learning that requires transition between oral and written language and levels of cognition. That is, writing requires thought to produce it and thought to understand it. When writing is successfully taught and implemented using the HSPT Primary/Intermediate Benchmark Skills (Appendix A) and "how to" instructional strategies through writing as a process approach, students' skills in communication, learning, and remembering are enhanced. Educators of elementary school children should expect to see student gains in writing on their local standardized measure, as well as on the HSPT writing component (multiple-choice and essay) when these same students are ninth graders. Of course, student gains depend upon student attendance and participation as well as the educators' involvement with their students in the implementation process back in their classrooms.

LITERACY: AN ACTIVE PROCESS FOR INSTRUCTION

An instructional strategy cannot be viewed without knowledge of the students who will be exposed to it. It may be that to provide what is needed, some

new strategies and/or programs need to be added to existing ones. This resource book, therefore, provides instructional strategies that are linked to literacy as it is measured by district tools of assessment and the skill clusters of the High School Proficiency Test. Within the classroom, the teacher needs to select and, in some cases, adapt the strategies to the specific needs of the student(s).

Establish a Plan

First, the educator needs to participate in a planning or focusing stage, in other words, to plan instructional strategies within varied social contexts that address the program or instructional needs of students. Begin this step by focusing on answering the following questions:

- What are the objectives (outcomes) of the strategy for your student(s)?
- What is to be the specific content or timelines of the strategy in light of the objectives?
- Will additional resources be needed to implement the strategy?
- Can other program areas and social contexts serve to supplement, reinforce, or even introduce this strategy?

Analyze Existing Plans

The next step toward skill improvement involves analyzing existing instructional strategies in light of their contribution to each skill and identifying possible improvements. This step is designed to ensure that what is taught aligns with what is tested (as measured on a district test and on the HSPT). Content validity can be determined by aligning the content of the curriculum with the content of the test, including instructional strategies/materials and the statement of instructional goals or objectives. Once mastery of a given set of skills has been attained, it is necessary to provide students with exposure to additional strategies that reinforce the skill and maintain mastery. To help you in the process of alignment, see NJSDE (1985), Getting the Most from the New Jersey HSPT: A Practical Guide to Resolving Curriculum Design and Delivery Programs and Appendix C: Teaching-Learning-Assessing.

Select Instruction

The last stage is selective instruction. Instructional goals or objectives delivered through content-valid instructional strategies are the foundation of effective teaching (See Sections VII and VIII). In order to ensure students' "high success rate" as related to these skills, research has stated that, on average, student responses should be at 75 to 90 percent correct. Therefore, it is necessary to have effective lessons constructed to promote both high student success and long-term retention of content. Generally accepted in effective school research are the following recommendations for increasing student learning: daily review; guided practice; teacher

involvement; feedback and correctives; independent work; and weekly and monthly reviews (Rosenshine, 1983).

A summary of these recommendations follows. Daily review includes checking the student's previous day's work while guided practice provides an overview or a demonstration/modeling of material, questions, and answers. Teacher involvement requires that teachers facilitate activities that have students respond through written responses, such as responding to a partner, group discussion, and/or choral responses (in small group). Teacher or peer feedback and correctives are provided during guided practice; and independent work commences only after successful guided practice, allowing students to progress from a slow "think it through" stage to an automatic, fluent response. In order to determine whether mastery is attained, weekly and monthly reviews need to occur regularly and systematically. An organized, consistent approach to reviewing students' learning is a necessary part of helping students to retain knowledge, strategies, and skills in short-term, as well as long-term memory.

COGNITIVE OBJECTIVES AND THE WRITING TASK

> **Though differing in function, thought and language are united, mature thought only developing in the presence of language.** (Glassner, 1981, pp. 148-149)

This section introduces the concept of writing as thinking since children learn early on that print represents meaning. The following has been adapted from the paper on higher-order thinking skills presented by the author at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association in San Francisco, California (Bloom, 1986). Specific instructional strategies are found in the remaining sections of this document and are matched to the three clusters of the HSPT (Sentence Structure, Organization of Ideas, and Editing) and the Registered Holistic Essay Scoring Guide Criteria. All materials were developed by the New Jersey State Department of Education and implemented by the regional curriculum service units (RCSUs), which conducted the HSPT Institutes for teachers of grades four through six. Therefore, the purpose of this section is to help you conceptualize the cluster of skills that are assessed on the HSPT and their interrelatedness to thought and written language at grades four and beyond.

It needs to be understood that the multiple-choice component of the writing test is, cognitively speaking, addressing learning at its earliest stage of development. Using Bloom's taxonomy in ascending order of complexity, sophistication, and difficulty, the multiple-choice component of the writing test would be best identified within the cognitive objective -- KNOWLEDGE. At this first level, the student must recall and remember knowledge previously learned and associate this to the items or examples presented on the test.

With respect to the essay component, student's direct application of their command of written language, writing is emphasized as a higher-order

thinking skill. In addition to KNOWLEDGE, students must cognitively apply COMPREHENSION, APPLICATION, ANALYSIS, SYNTHESIS, AND EVALUATION in order to command written language. Bloom (1986) states that writing requires knowledge of one's topic (content); a cogent application of that knowledge (organization); use of the English language according to a recognized standard (usage); the structuring of words and sentences to present a complete thought or message to the intended audience(s) (sentence construction); and the application of the conventions of the English language that serve to clarify the author's intended message (mechanics).

WRITING AS A HIGHER-ORDER THINKING SKILL

> **Many researchers view writing not only as a medium of thought but also as a vehicle for developing it. Some types of elaborated thinking are not possible unless the propositions are written down. Both the acts of comprehending and composing thoughts require higher level thinking skills.** (Bloom, 1986)

As mentioned earlier, the basic premise of this paper is the relationship of writing to higher-order thinking skills. If we look at Benjamin Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive skills and relate those skills to writing, we will see the following relationship between the cognitive objectives and the writing task.

Bloom's taxonomy in ascending order of complexity, sophistication, and difficulty is as follows:

COGNITIVE OBJECTIVES	RELATED WRITING TASK
Knowledge	Recall/remember/associate previously learned knowledge to the essay topic or prompt.
Comprehension	Translate/grasp/understand/clarify meaning associated with prior knowledge, and address that meaning to explain or focus on the given topic.
Application	Generalize/associate prior knowledge (content) to new and concrete situations related to the given topic, message, and audience.
Analysis	Breakdown/discover/distill/compare and contrast prior knowledge (content) in order to organize or reorganize that knowledge into its component parts (main idea, supporting details) for ease of understanding by the reader. Moffett (1968) calls this skill "precise-processing."
Synthesis	Compose or put knowledge together to form a new whole employing focus, content, organization, and language construction (syntax and lexical) to help the reader progress from beginning to end. A skill characterized as the act of

cohesion - the essential quality which makes a text a text. (Halliday & Hassan, 1976).

Evaluation — Judge the value of the written essay or artifact on the topic given for the message, purpose, and the audience intended.

In conclusion, writing is viewed by many researchers as not only a medium of thought but also a vehicle for developing it. As people think, they actively engage their minds to discover and contemplate ideas, issues, or problems they care about and can relate to a given topic, as in the case of a test taker. According to Tipper (1985), "when the writer wrestles with ideas, meanings and words, that is what thinking is made of, what poetry, philosophy, criticism, and invention are born of." Certainly we want students to graduate from our high schools with basic skills, but we also want them to have the ability to think and apply these skills in varied contexts. As Piaget (1970) states, "knowing an object does not mean copying it - it means acting upon it." The writer acts on his/her experiences in relation to a given prompt.

Thus, proficient writing is a disciplined activity requiring an ability to express thoughts clearly and coherently. It requires planning and working toward a goal, decomposing a task into component subtasks, and integrating partial products into a coherent whole. With respect to teaching and assessment, the major advantage of writing is that it yields a tangible product that can be re-examined and evaluated. A writer puts his/her mind out before the reader, rather like a photograph. However, as students quickly perceive, the reader must make meaning of the written text in order to join the writer in a shared experience. Student-writers need to be guided, taught, and informed as to what is essential to the command of written language. They need to understand that a goal of writing is to develop clear thinkers. A student who can translate thought into writing, take hold of a writing topic, create an original response under the constraints of writing on demand -- what better way to assess higher-order thinking skills?

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RELATIONSHIP

All writing documents developed by the New Jersey State Department of Education emphasize the recursive process of writing. Writing is emphasized as not linear in sequence but, rather, interactive and recursive. Throughout the writing process, thinking is pivotal, causing the writer to draw information from memory, generate and revise plans in the act of drafting, reviewing, and revising that which is written, and, most critically, monitor the entire process. Appendix F: A Writer's Reflection on the Writing Process emphasizes the interrelatedness of thinking and writing. The question that needs to be addressed, however, is: "What are the educational implications of such a close relationship?"

The rest of this document addresses the instructional relationship between thinking and writing and literacy. Language literacy in the classroom is reinforced within the paradigm -- teaching- learning-assessing. The impact of this interrelatedness, with a focus on the HSPT, is presented below.

A. Instructional Strategies Related to the Skill Array and Multiple-Choice Section of the HSPT

B. Instructional Strategies Related to the Skill Array and the Essay Section of the HSPT

- Organization/Content
- Sentence Structure/Construction
- Revising
- Editing

Instructionally, the writing program of the elementary and intermediate grades should emphasize a combination organic and mastery approach. The organic approach is student-centered and advocates that students write personally and imaginatively, that is, without constant correction by the teacher. This valuing of real feelings and fluent writing is very important in the early elementary years. In the intermediate years, a mastery approach is emphasized. In this approach, the teacher values authentic feelings and fluent writing, but within a context of careful analysis, planned teaching, and systematic assessment. Of course, the optimal balance of these two approaches, in tandem with the following three phases of language learning, is best determined by district curriculum specialists and classroom teachers.

THREE PHASES OF LANGUAGE LEARNING

When educators participate instructionally in students' process of language learning, instructors need to consider the following three phases of learning and the activities that typify the abilities of such language learning. The three phases, closely related to the three High School Proficiency Test clusters of sentence structure, organization of ideas, and editing, are the language abilities of recognition, manipulation/alteration, and application/origination. However, the emphasis is on requiring students to actually compose, the culminating goal of the three-phase process since all language experts concur that frequent composition activities are crucial to language mastery.

Recognition Phase

Cognitive Objective: KNOWLEDGE AND COMPREHENSION

One phase of learning about language is characterized by being able to recognize or identify parts of speech, tell a sentence from a fragment, or name common punctuation elements. At this level students can: find the subject, distinguish between a comma and an apostrophe, etc.

The development of such abilities is typified by activities such as:

1. Recognizing fragments as opposed to complete sentences:

   - Because Bob walks to the store.

2. Identifying correct agreement of subject and verb:

   - Each of the girls were there.

Manipulation/Alteration Phase

Cognitive Objective: KNOWLEDGE, COMPREHENSION, APPLICATION

A second phase of language activity requires that students do more than just identify or remember names; it requires that students be able to correct, manipulate, or alter language. This manipulation or language altering phase is closely related to the editing stage and is typified by activities that ask students to: pick the correct verb, capitalize the appropriate word or letters, turn a sentence fragment into a complete sentence, etc.

The development of these abilities is typified by activities such as:

1. Selecting the correct verb form in the following sentence:

   - The boys (is, are) good friends.

2. Capitalizing the appropriate words in the following sentence:

   - i saw Mr. smith at the corner of high and main.

Although both the recognition phase and the manipulation phase may be considered important to the language development process, a third phase, the application phase, is crucial.

Application/Origination Phase

Cognitive Objective: KNOWLEDGE, COMPREHENSION, APPLICATION, ANALYSIS, SYNTHESIS, EVALUATION

During this phase, the student is asked to apply the editing skills he or she has learned as a part of his grammar instruction (mechanics and conventions of standard edited English) to his own composition. Thus, this third phase of language activity exemplifies the recursive aspect of the writing process and requires that students actually compose (sometimes orally) their own material while remembering to punctuate, make subjects and verbs agree, use descriptive language, etc.

The development of such composition abilities is typified by activities such as:

1. Writing a sentence, poem, paragraph, theme, play, character sketch, etc.

2. Writing a sentence using one contraction and one proper noun.

3. Using the following words in a paragraph: juice, golden, nectarine, skin, sweet, liquid, squeeze, segments, round.

Although language experts may disagree on the role and/or use of grammar instruction - (in whatever form) as a prerequisite to writing - all concur that frequent composition activities in a variety of functions or modes are crucial to language mastery.

II. INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE SKILL ARRAY AND THE MULTIPLE-CHOICE SECTION OF THE HSPT WRITING TEST

GENERAL TEACHING GUIDELINES

1. Instruct students to make good use of their time when they take a test. Because there is no guessing penalty on the HSPT, instruct students to mark an answer to every question in the multiple-choice section. If students are unsure of an answer, they should mark one tentatively, circle the number, and return to it if time allows. The items are not ordered for difficulty. Students should not become discouraged if they do not know an answer but should mark a response and move along to the next one. When they guess, they should eliminate unlikely alternatives and read the remainder so that they can "hear" the words. If they are looking for an error, they should listen for the one that sounds "funny." If they are looking for correction, they should listen for the one that sounds "right."

2. Practice using the following techniques with students:

   A. Use one of the previous tests as a pretest and as a motivator for the instruction, practice, and feedback that they will receive in subsequent sessions. Correct the test with the students. Tell them that the results will not count.

   B. Elicit from the students reasons for their given performance on the test, whether strong or weak. Asking students to put into writing specific areas of confusion or bewilderment helps the student raise a possible lack of understanding to the conscious level so that it can be dealt with through instruction. Those who answered an item correctly might share some of their cognitive strategies. Those who did not might point out some of the pitfalls of the test, e.g., failing to read directions carefully or failing to guess wisely.

   C. Review the varied directions and formats on the multiple-choice section. Model the process of answering questions for each section. Verbalize your thinking process as you consider each item. Ask some students to demonstrate their thinking process as they attempt an item. As students practice items, provide immediate feedback on answers; and explain why an answer is correct or incorrect. This feedback can also be provided through peer response groups.

   D. Ask students to make up additional test items that are similar to those in each section. Teams can exchange their questions and compete to see which ones get the most items correct in a limited time.

WRITING TEST REFERENCE AND INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDELINES FOR TEACHING THE SKILLS OF EACH CLUSTER

CLUSTER I: SENTENCE STRUCTURE/CONSTRUCTION (SKILLS A, B, C, D, E)

CLUSTER II: ORGANIZATION OF IDEAS (SKILLS A, B, C, D)

CLUSTER III: EDITING (SKILLS A, B)

CLUSTER I: SENTENCE STRUCTURE/CONSTRUCTION

Introduction

When introducing students to written language use, it is important that students understand how transitional words and phrases signal relationships among ideas both in sentences and in paragraphs. In the Sentence Structure Cluster, the B and C set of skills may be the easiest because they require comprehension of only a single sentence and the ability to manipulate it logically using a conjunction. Skill A requires the manipulation of incomplete sentences using phrases, modifiers, signal words, conjunctions, and punctuation to achieve parallel sentence structure. The next skill, Skill D, requires that the student comprehend a paragraph and the relation among its sentences in order to select the appropriate chronological or logical conjunctions that join the sentences. Skill E asks students to locate an error within a complete sentence. Although this skill is assessed in this cluster, the skill is more clearly defined and practiced in the editing cluster. See Cluster III for further explanation of this skill.

SKILL A:

SELECT A SENTENCE REVISION THAT CORRECTS AN ERROR IN SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION

DIRECTIONS FOR SKILL A:

Each sentence below has an underlined portion that may be correct or incorrect. Choose the answer you believe is correct.

Example: Ask students to recognize whether a sentence fits the definition of a complete sentence or presents the ideas in an appropriate way. Work with students using transitional words that show alternatives, show cause and effect, show time, summarize, or qualify.

Transitional words that:

show alternatives	of course, even if, even though, certainly, granted that, on the contrary, yet, however, but, still, nevertheless, conversely, on the other hand, though, although

show cause and effect	as a result, because, that caused, that resulted in, inevitably, that produced, consequently, therefore
summarize	this, therefore, consequently, in short, finally
show time	first, then, finally, next, last, second, later, earlier, morning, afternoon, evening, last year, next year, now, then, before, after, afterwards, immediately, soon, suddenly, previously, usually, until, meanwhile, never, occasionally
qualify	provided, in case, in some cases, unless, if, when, not unless, occasionally, rarely, only if, even if, even though

Help students to understand that parallel constructions express two or more parts or ideas in a sentence in parallel or balanced arrangement. To do this, pair nouns with nouns, infinitives with infinitives, phrases with phrases, clauses with clauses, and verbs with verbs.

Examples: To keep cool and being obedient are essential. (unparallel)

Keeping cool and being obedient are essential. (parallel)

Snowflakes fell, fluffy, white, and looking like goose-down. (unparallel)

Snowflakes fell, fluffy, white, and downy. (parallel)

Review student's writing, and select examples to illustrate how misused modifiers puzzle the reader. Show students how to keep related words together. Modifiers should come, if possible, next to the words they modify. Confusion and ambiguity result when words are badly placed.

Example: After the mayor had watched the lion perform, he was taken to Main Street and fed 25 pounds of raw meat. (incorrect construction)

After performing for the mayor, the lion was taken to Main Street and fed 25 pounds of raw meat. (correct construction).

SKILL B:

COMBINE IDEAS INTO A WELL-CONSTRUCTED SENTENCE

DIRECTIONS FOR SKILL B:

Choose the best way to combine the following ideas into one well-constructed sentence. Keep the meaning of the original sentences.

Example: Remind students that ideas contained in sentences can be combined in different ways. However, the sentence must be interesting, informative, and correct. When students combine sentences, they must remember the following:

A. It must contain all the original ideas;
B. It must not be a fragment;
C. It must not be a run-on.

Example: Place sentences comparable to those found in the test section on the board. Ask for possible combinations from students. Discuss whether they meet the criteria for well-formed sentences. Take additional examples from sentence combining sections of recent composition texts.

Example: Ask students to review one of their recent writings for fragments, run-ons, and simple sentences that could be combined into well-formed sentences. Students also benefit by reviewing the writing of others.

SKILL C:

SELECT WORDS THAT COMPLETE A PARTIALLY CONSTRUCTED SENTENCE

DIRECTIONS FOR SKILL C:

Choose the words that best complete the newly constructed sentence. Keep the meaning of the original sentence.

Example: Teach students that the same thought can be constructed in several ways. Place the clauses of compound and complex sentences on strips of transparencies for the overhead, and ask the students to suggest ways to vary the structure of the sentence but not the meaning by rearranging the clauses and using different conjunctions. (The conjunctions can also be typed on separate strips so that you or a student can physically change the sentences as the class discusses them.)

Example: Place items from the test section on the overhead. Guide the class to identify the correct choice and to understand why the other choices are incorrect. Ask students to make up additional examples.

Example: Make up sentence stems that end with one of the following conjunctions: because, and, but, although, even though, if, while, since. Ask the students to complete them logically and then to change the structure of the sentence without changing the meaning. Discuss the different signal sent by each conjunction. Point out when to use a comma before the words and and but, as well as when to delete the comma.

SKILL D:

SELECT TRANSITION WORDS TO COMPLETE A PARAGRAPH

DIRECTIONS FOR SKILL D:

Read the paragraphs below. Choose the word that best completes each sentence. Read the entire paragraph before making your choice.

Example: Remind the students to read the entire paragraph before making their choice.

Remind the class of the following: a word may be used more than once, but that occurs rarely; and a word might make sense in an individual sentence, yet it might not make sense in the paragraph.

Point out the differences between chronological and logical connectors, and tell students that in prior years many students have missed the items that required the use of logical connectors. Therefore, they should concentrate on these words.

Example: Place short paragraphs with transitions deleted on a transparency. List the transitions and distractors below the paragraph. At first ask capable students to model their selection of answers. Later ask less capable students to demonstrate their approach. Students can provide some of the sample paragraphs by taking them from newspapers or other sources and deleting the transitions.

SKILL E:

IDENTIFY THE ERROR WITHIN A SENTENCE CONTAINING A USAGE ERROR

DIRECTIONS FOR SKILL E: (Also Editing Cluster)

Read each sentence. Find the underlined section that contains an error. Mark the letter for the location of the error.

Example: Use the editing phase of the "writing process" to focus students' attention on the usage errors tested within a sentence. Devise a checklist that addresses each area of usage. Ask peer response groups to use the checklist as they review other students' papers.

Example: Write a paragraph that contains several of the errors tested on the HSPT. Pass out copies to teams of three or four students. They can play "Beat the Clock" to see who can find the most errors in a limited time. Give a reward to the winning team, e.g., bonus points.

CLUSTER II: ORGANIZATION OF IDEAS

Introduction

Within the skills of this cluster, students need to be taught how to seek meaning, how to monitor their progress in unlocking meaning, and how to circumvent misunderstanding of text. In the cluster, Organization of Ideas, the B set of skills is the easiest since this skill requires the comprehension of only the one detail that could logically be the second sentence of the paragraph. Skill Set A, on the other hand, requires synthesis of important words and phrases in a paragraph to identify the main idea. Skill Set C requires the same synthesis to independently generate the main idea and then to identify the irrelevant detail. The last set of skills in this cluster, Skill D, may be the most difficult because some of the signal words and phrases are more subtle and the student must mentally manipulate four sentences while attempting to order the paragraph.

SKILL A:

SELECT THE MAIN IDEA FOR A PARAGRAPH

DIRECTIONS FOR SKILL A:

Read each paragraph. Choose the statement that best expresses the general idea of the paragraph.

Example: Remind students that the words "general idea" are the same as main idea. The main idea is a summary of the paragraph. (Warn them that the correct answer may not be similar to any one sentence in the paragraph. An incorrect answer may be very similar to one of the sentences in the paragraph.) Also, an incorrect answer may either focus on one detail or make a summary statement that is true but irrelevant to the paragraph.

Example: Place a sample question from the HSPT on an overhead. Ask students to write down their choices as well as the reason for that choice. Discuss both their choices and reasons. Ask students who selected correctly to describe their strategies. Some may mention that they looked for key words and phrases and noted or underscored them. Point out that this is an efficient strategy.

Example: Take a sample paragraph from a composition text but delete the main idea. Ask students to generate a summary statement.

Example: Ask students to take paragraphs from their own writing, recopy them without their main ideas, and give them to a partner. The partner then generates a summary statement that can be compared with the original.

SKILL B:

SELECT A DETAIL THAT SUPPORTS A MAIN IDEA

DIRECTIONS FOR SKILL B:

Choose the best supporting detail for the main idea expressed by the sentence in the box.

Example: Remind students that all four details will relate to the topic, but only one could logically follow the sentence in the box.

Example: Place a sample from the test on an overhead. Ask students to individually mark their choice and write a reason for that choice. Discuss their choices and reasons. Teams can then work on a dittoed set taken from recent HSPT sections.

SKILL C:

IDENTIFY A DETAIL INAPPROPRIATE TO THE MAIN IDEA

DIRECTIONS FOR SKILL C:

Read each paragraph. Choose the sentence that does not belong in the paragraph as it is written.

Example: Instruct students to view each sentence in a paragraph as part of an interrelated whole. Each sentence should address the general idea of the paragraph. In this section, look for the main idea in the first sentence. The sentence that does not elaborate or explain the first sentence is probably the incorrect detail. Reread the paragraph without the item. If it sounds better, the student has made the correct choice.

Example: Use samples from the HSPT for additional practice items.

Example: Ask students to write a general (main idea) sentence and then write five supporting statements for it. One should be irrelevant to the main idea. Students exchange papers, and partners pick out the irrelevant detail.

SKILL D:

REORGANIZE SETS OF SENTENCES INTO A LOGICAL ORDER

DIRECTIONS FOR SKILL D:

Read each numbered sentence. Choose the best order to arrange the sentences in a logical paragraph.

Example: Instruct students to look for time order or logical order in the paragraphs by finding words such as first, second, then, finally or words such as although, but, however. (See pages 14-15 for additional examples.) They should read all the sentences rapidly to get the "gist." Then they should mark their order on the test and look for a match in the response items below.

Example: Place a sample list of four sentences on an overhead together with the four response options. Ask students to discuss choices and reasons. Students can also make up their own lists of sentences and exchange with partners for extra practice.

Example: Less proficient students might benefit from physically manipulating the sentences on strips of paper or from participating in round robin taped stories in which each student must incorporate a transition term signalling time or logical order.

Example: Ask students to take a paragraph from their own writing that contains a main idea and supporting details. Have them recopy the sentences on separate slips of paper. Depending on ability level, they may or may not identify the main idea slip. The sentence slips are placed in one envelope for each paragraph. Each student receives a partner's envelope and tries to arrange the paragraph as it was written. If the student develops a different arrangement, he must give his reasons. Possibly the writer will decide to revise his original paragraph.

CLUSTER III: EDITING

Introduction

Two skills, A and B, are identified below. Skill A, the easier of the two, reviews the identification of errors in a paragraph, which is similar to the skill (identification of an error in a sentence) assessed in Cluster I: Sentence Structure - Skill E. (See page 17). Skill B has two different sets of directions, but each requires the student to identify and correct the error. Overall, the editing skills on the test address four areas:

Spelling	Usually words with multiple spellings (their, there, to, too) or words that are often spelled incorrectly.
Pronoun Use	Examples: to Sara and me; He and Mike.
Punctuation	Apostrophe, quotation marks, and commas.
Capitalization	Proper/common nouns and words in direct quotations.

SKILL A:

PROOFREAD AND IDENTIFY A MECHANICAL ERROR IN A WRITING SAMPLE

DIRECTIONS FOR SKILL A:

Proofread each paragraph, and find the error that should be corrected. Mark the letter that indicates where the error is located.

Example: Type a paragraph that contains several mechanical errors tested on the HSPT. Pass out copies to teams of three or four students. They can play "Beat the Clock" to see who can find the most errors in a limited time. Give a reward to the winning team, e.g., bonus points.

Use the editing phase of the "writing process" to focus students' attention on the four areas tested in these sections. Devise a checklist that addresses each area. Ask peer response groups to use the checklist as they review other students' papers.

SKILL B:

IDENTIFY MECHANICAL ERROR IN A WRITING SAMPLE AND SELECT APPROPRIATE CORRECTION

DIRECTIONS FOR SKILL B:

Each sentence below has an underlined portion that may be correct or incorrect. Choose the answer you believe is correct.

or

Read each sentence or group of sentences. One of the underlined words or phrases contains an error. Read the answer choices, and choose the appropriate correction.

Example: Use the Editing, Dictation Exercise that is presented in Appendix D -- Dictation: An Instructional Strategy for Editing. Make up a sentence that addresses test items on the HSPT (e.g., "I would like to go to the party," said Ruby, "but I must stay home and read Hawthorne's Scarlet Letter.") Determine the points to be allocated for correction. Then ask the students to correct the sentence and add up the points. Those who do not meet your criterion must repeat the activity in subsequent classes.

Example: Take a paragraph from one of their stories, and make errors in the four areas -- spelling, pronoun use, punctuation, and capitalization. Ask students to correct the paragraph and compare their version with the originals.

III. INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE SKILL ARRAY AND THE ESSAY SECTION OF THE HSPT WRITING TEST

GENERAL TEACHING GUIDELINES

The writer shuttles between language and thought while shifting back and forth among the five stages of composing. These recursive stages include prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and postwriting (See Figure 1).

The prewriting stage extends from the moment when the writer feels the need, or senses a stimulus, to write to the moment when he/she begins to draft sustained discourse. It is a period of incubation as the writer identifies his or her purpose, discovers a topic, generates related ideas, organizes them, and finds a form for writing. All remain tentative and subject to change during the next two stages.

The drafting stage extends from the moment the writer begins to write a sustained piece of discourse. It consists of four components: starting, drafting, reformulating, and stopping. During this stage the writer alternates between writing and reading, pausing and planning, and may return to prewriting.

The revising stage follows the drafting stage and includes adding, deleting, substituting, and reordering ideas, paragraphs, sentences, phrases, and words. While rewriting, the writer may return to the first two stages repeatedly as he/she revises successive drafts. For this reason, many researchers say that this is the stage in which writers really learn the craft of writing.

The editing stage refers to correcting punctuation, mechanics, usage, and spelling prior to going public with the text.

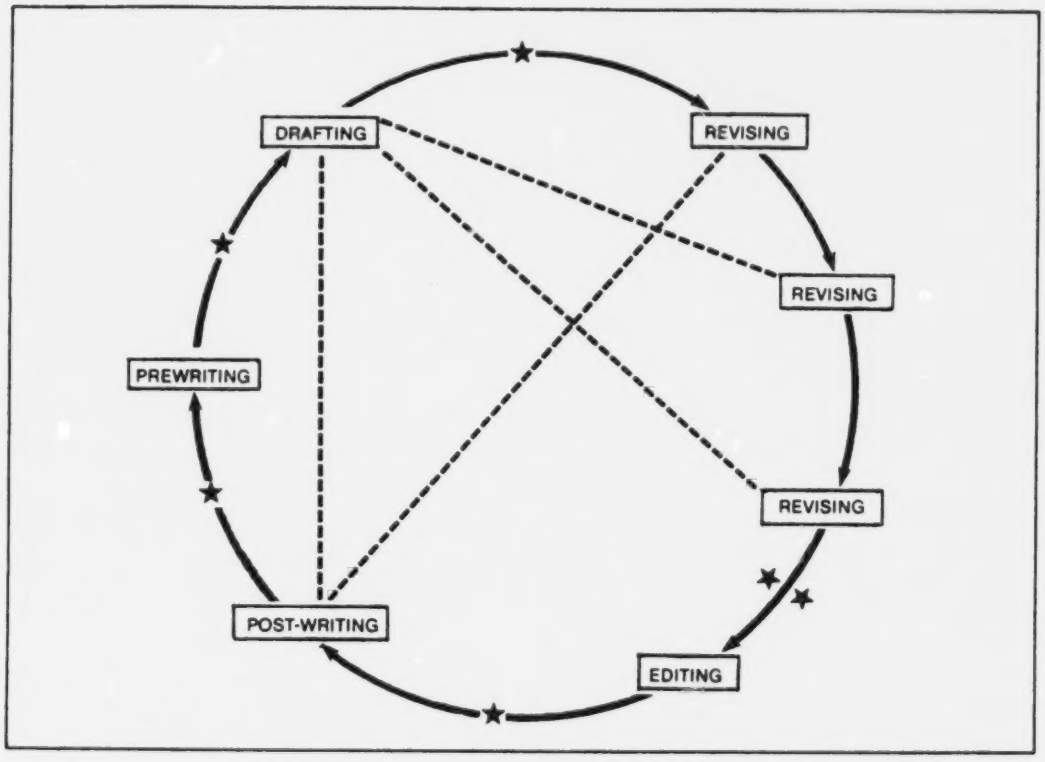
The postwriting stage refers to the fifth stage of the process. It includes evaluation of the work by the writer, peers, the teacher, and other interested audiences. For teachers, it serves a two-fold purpose by focusing attention both on the value of the student's writing and on the student's developmental strengths and weaknesses as a writer, which facilitates instructional planning.

NOTE 1: To assist students in this recursive writing process, use the format provided in Appendix F.

NOTE 2: To assist teachers in understanding essential principles in the teaching of writing, the NCTE Commission on Composition drafted a position statement, which appears on pages 25 - 27.

FIGURE 1

WRITING--A RECURSIVE PROCESS



*Represents teacher checkpoints or intervention responses that support the composing process by encouraging reflection, elaboration, and refinement of thought in writing.

**Designates critical intervention checkpoints for teacher- and/or peer-interaction with student-writer. Revision Checklists for student/teacher use are provided in the section entitled, "Ideas for Instruction." Bloom, D.S. (1985). Understanding the writing process: Introducing students to composing. Trenton, New Jersey: New Jersey State Department of Education.

NOTE: Suggestions for teacher/peer intervention are provided in Bloom, D.S. (1986). Conferencing: assessing growth and change in student writing. Trenton, New Jersey: New Jersey State Department of Education.

Teaching Composition: A Position Statement

The NCTE Commission on Composition has prepared and adopted the following position paper to state essential principles in the teaching of writing. The statement has been cleared for publication by the Executive Committee of the NCTE. It is an expression of the views of the Commission on Composition and does not represent an official NCTE position statement. The members of the commission hope that this statement will guide teachers, parents, and administrators in understanding the power of writing and in teaching it effectively:

The Act of Writing

Writing is a powerful instrument of thought. In the act of composing, writers learn about themselves and their world and communicate their insights to others. Writing confers the power to grow personally and to effect change in the world.

The act of writing is accomplished through a process in which the writer imagines the audience, sets goals, develops ideas, produces notes, drafts, and a revised text, and edits to meet the audience's expectations. As the process unfolds, the writer may turn to any one of these activities at any time. We can teach students to write more effectively by encouraging them to make full use of the many activities that comprise the act of writing, not by focusing only on the final written product and its strengths and weaknesses.

The Purposes for Writing

In composing, the writer uses language to help an audience understand something the writer knows about the world. The specific purposes for writing vary widely, from discovering the writer's own feelings, to persuading others to a course of action, creating experience imaginatively, reporting the results of observation, and more.

Writing assignments should reflect this range of purposes. Student writers should have the opportunity to define and pursue writing aims that are important to them. Student writers should also have the opportunity to use writing as an instrument of thought and learning across the curriculum and in the world beyond school.

The Scenes for Writing

In the classroom, where writing is especially valued, students should be guided through the writing process, encouraged to write for themselves and for other students, as well as for the teacher, and urged to make use of writing as a mode of learning, as well as a means of reporting on what has been learned. The classroom where writing is especially valued should be a place where students will

develop the full range of their composing powers. This classroom can also be the scene for learning in many academic areas, not only English.

Because frequent writing assignments and frequent individual attention from the teacher are essential to the writing classroom, writing classes should not be larger than twenty students.

Teachers in all academic areas who have not been trained to teach writing may need help in transforming their classrooms into scenes for writing. The writing teacher should provide leadership in explaining the importance of this transformation and in supplying resources to help bring it about.

The Teachers of Writing

Writing teachers should themselves be writers. Through experiencing the struggles and joys of writing, teachers learn that their students will need guidance and support throughout the writing process, not merely comments on the written product. Furthermore, writing teachers who write know that effective comments do not focus on pointing out errors, but go on to the more productive task of encouraging revision, which will help student writers to develop their ideas and to achieve greater clarity and honesty.

Writing teachers should be familiar with the current state of our knowledge about composition. They should know about the nature of the composing process; the relationship between reading and writing; the functions of writing in the world of work; the value of the classical rhetorical tradition; and more. Writing teachers should use this knowledge in their teaching, contribute to it in their scholarly activities, and participate in the professional organizations that are important sources of this knowledge.

The knowledgeable writing teacher can more persuasively lead colleagues in other academic areas to increased attention to writing in their classes. The knowledgeable teacher can also work more effectively with parents and administrators to promote good writing instruction.

The Means of Writing Instruction

Students learn to write by writing. Guidance in the writing process and discussion of the students' own work should be the central means of writing instruction. Students should be encouraged to comment on each other's writing, as well as receiving frequent, prompt, individualized attention from the teacher. Reading what others have written, speaking about one's responses to their writing, and listening to the responses of others are important activities in the writing classroom. Textbooks and other instructional resources should be of secondary importance.

The evaluation of students' progress in writing should begin with the students' own written work. Writing ability cannot be adequately assessed by tests and other formal evaluation alone. Students should be given the opportunity to demonstrate their writing ability in work aimed at various purposes. Students should also be encouraged to develop the critical ability to evaluate their own work, so that they can become effective, independent writers in the world beyond school.

Source: NCTE Commission on Composition. (1986, October). College English, 46(6).

On Grammar Exercises to Teach Speaking and Writing

RESOLVED, that the National Council of Teachers of English affirms the position that the use of isolated grammar and usage exercises not supported by theory and research is a deterrent to the improvement of students' speaking and writing and that, in order to improve both of these, class time at all levels must be devoted to opportunities for meaningful listening, speaking, reading and writing; and that NCTE urges the discontinuance of testing practices that encourage the teaching of grammar rather than English language arts instruction.

NCTE; December, 1985

[Author's Note: The HSPT has a total of 66 items; of those, only two skills, 4 items, address the student's knowledge of grammar.]

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES RELATED TO ORGANIZATION/CONTENT

Introduction

In New Jersey, educational programs require that students write well enough to answer test questions, write basic reports, and complete homework assignments. In Evaluating and Improving Written Expression, Hall (1981) states that "poor writers have difficulty planning their writing. As a result, they do not always write clear topic sentences nor appropriate, properly sequenced, supportive details, and relevant summaries or conclusions." Furthermore, Hall has found that main ideas and details are improperly handled and are frequently unbalanced -- either a generalization is given without supportive detail, or an overabundance of detail is provided with no generalization. Because poor writers lack planning skills, they have difficulty identifying a good starting point, keeping to their topic (they change a line of thinking as new thoughts occur to them), and covering their topic completely. Other students, who have mastered basic organizational structure (topic sentence, supportive details, conclusion), produce reports that are adequate, but not interesting or well developed.

Poor writers need experiences designed to help them focus on these problems. The emphasis of the activities in this section is on building organizational skills through thinking, listening, and reading activities before actual writing assignments are given. The purpose is to teach students how to organize information before they begin to write.

The following specific organization skills related to a topic content are developed in this section. All of the skills that follow are linked to the HSPT multiple-choice cluster, Organization of Ideas, as well as to the essay component of the test.

Categorizing (Skill C)

Categorizing activities that are included in this document help students identify relationships between words and sentences and enable them to identify and eliminate irrelevant details and sentences from stories and paragraphs.

Example: Provide the student with a set of pictures (animals, cars, planes, clothing, furniture, etc.). Have the student group items according to common factors. For each factor, the student writes a sentence stating the factor in common, then lists the appropriate objects under the topic sentence. The student then writes one or more paragraphs relating the objects to the topic sentence.

Organizing/Sequencing (Skill D)

Sequencing in narrative or expressive writing is relatively natural as students tell stories the way they happen. Expository or transactional

writing, however, requires that students identify clear relationships (such as cause and effect or comparison and contrast) and sequence them appropriately. See the identification and development of these relationships in Understanding the Writing Process: Introducing Students to Composing (Bloom, 1985).

Example: Place the following statements on the board. Students are to read the statements and number them in the order in which the events occurred. Procedures may be accomplished orally at the board or as a writing exercise at their seats (Helping Student Writers, 1980).

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

____ **In his later life, he went to France as an ambassador.**

____ **He move to Philadelphia when he was seventeen.**

____ **He invented bifocals and a platform rocking chair.**

____ **Ben was born in Boston, Massachusetts.**

____ **Later he became an inventor and a scientist.**

____ **When he was a boy, he learned the candle-making trade from his father.**

____ **He was over eighty years old when he died in Philadelphia.**

____ **After he arrived in Philadelphia he learned the newspaper business.**

Following are four organization types: chronological, cause and effect, spatial, and comparison and contrast. All examples illustrate various formats whereby students can organize and sequence information on a given topic(s).

- **Chronological Organization**

Example: Provide students with a sample of related but unarranged sentences, such as the following. Have the children number the sentences as they think they should be arranged. Discuss the best order. Then have the children rewrite the story combining any sentences which seem to belong together (Hall, 1981).

Everyone came all dressed up.

Jane's mother judged the costumes.

Jane had a costume party.

They came dressed as clowns, witches, monsters, and animals.

When it came time for judging, everyone marched around the room.

She thought Mary's costume was the best.

- **Cause and Effect Organization**

Example: Provide the students with unordered sentences such as:

The snow was very deep.

The car got stuck.

The snowplow had not yet cleared out the street.

Father drove the car out of the driveway.

Have the students rearrange the sentences in a more effective order. Lead the children to understand the cause-and-effect patterns involved. Then direct them to write a paragraph using the appropriate connectors.

- **Spatial Organization**

Example: Tell the students that a visitor in the main office (or some other remote part of the building) wishes to come to this room. Have them describe the various areas, rooms, and halls that he would have to go by or through to get here. Point out that this is organizing material according to its spatial lay-out. If this is done orally first, have them write a paragraph describing the route afterwards.

- **Comparison and Contrast Organization**

Example: Bring to school two quite different objects or toys (games or stuffed animals, posters, trophies, and so on), and display them. After a general conversation, have students discuss the similarities and differences between them (e.g., appearance, function); and place answers on the chalkboard under two headings. Have students write a main idea sentence which shows how the two toys or objects are different and a main idea sentence which shows how the two toys or objects are similar. Discuss with the students words and phrases which could be helpful in writing paragraphs contrasting the two toys or objects, such as: also, yet, include, unlike, in addition to. Then have the students write the rest of the paragraphs with details from the board (Hall, 1981).

For students who need to physically manipulate ideas in order to organize two concepts, use the following example.

Example: Give an envelope to each student. Have students first locate the two title cards and put them at the top of the desk. Next, have students sort sentences under the corresponding title, sequence the sentence strips in meaningful order, then copy one paragraph on a piece of paper and read it out loud to see whether it makes sense.

SENTENCE SORT

Some snakes are very dangerous.

The giraffe is a strange-looking animal.

There are only seven bones in the giraffe's neck.

The largest and most dangerous is the diamondback rattlesnake.

It has the same number of bones that a mouse's neck has.

It can grow to be eight feet long.

This snake is easily identified.

The giraffe's thin legs are much stronger than the appear.

It can run at a speed of thirty miles an hour.

It has a rattle at the end of its trail.

Only the lion, the giraffe's only enemy, can run faster.

However, the giraffe can kill a lion with one kick from its hoof.

When people or animals approach the rattlesnake, it rattles its tail as a warning.

but the mouse's neck is much, much shorter.

Giraffes

Snakes

Stating the Main Idea (Skill A)

Writing a topic sentence that helps the reader focus on the intended purpose of the message is a critical skill. It involves the ability to make generalizations about related facts or details. Students learn to restate questions in the form of topic sentences - a necessary skill for test-taking.

Example: Have students examine the headline and the first paragraph of several newspaper articles. Discuss with the students the paragraph and the headlines to find the main idea. Have students jot down what they think the article is going to be about. Then read to confirm, negate, or elaborate the main idea. Next, ask the students to write a lead paragraph of a newspaper article, preferably a real school or community event. Have the students exchange paragraphs and write the headlines for one another's paragraphs. Have students discuss the appropriateness of the headline in relation to the main idea or, if necessary, the lack of a main idea. Another option is to hand out a news article without its headline and lead paragraphs. Have students develop these as a result of reading the rest of the article (Hall, 1981).

Providing Details (Skill B)

In order for paragraphs to be well developed, sufficient and appropriate details must be included. Students develop this skill by sorting and matching topic sentences and details and by selecting facts and details which prove basic generalizations. For additional examples and further explanations of some basic text structures, see Appendix C.

Example: To elicit specific details, have students examine with a magnifying glass certain small objects which you have provided. Have them list up to 25 details that describe one of the objects. Have them include details that appeal to as many senses as possible. Have the students decide how to organize or group the details. Have them write a description of the object, using the details on the list.

Maintaining Coherence and Using Transition (Skill D)

Example: Take a short magazine article. Cut the paragraphs apart. Have students reassemble the paragraphs in order.

Remind students that the journalistic questions of who, what, where, when, why, how can apply to several types of writing, although all the questions are not necessarily answered in the first paragraph when the writing is not a magazine or a newspaper article. Have students answer the journalistic questions orally.

DB/lp:1/3054j

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES RELATED TO SENTENCE STRUCTURE/CONSTRUCTION

The following strategies reflect a student's construction of meaning in written form using recognized forms of syntax and varied word choice.

Example: Give student several sentence fragments to turn into sentences. These may be from student writing or fragments the teacher has devised, such as:

Bringing one sack each
Don't use peanut butter where
The fire, spreading fast
If people were living on the moon,

Discuss the finished work as to whether the sentences are complete or not. Ask students to choose one of the completed sentences and use it in a paragraph.

Example: Kernel Sentence Development.

Divide the class into five or six teams. Each student receives a copy of the same kernel sentence with a set of six directions for expansion. Have the first student complete the first direction on a piece of paper and then hand the paper to the next member of the team who is to follow the second direction, and so on for all the members of the team. The last team member can then read the sentence to the group. Each team can compare its sentence with those written by the other teams.

Kernel Sentence: **The man entered the store.**

1. **Tell what job or profession the man has.**
2. **Use two adjectives to describe the man.**
3. **Use a more specific verb in the sentence.**
4. **Use two adverbs to explain how he did the action.**
5. **Tell what kind of store.**
6. **Use two adjectives to describe the store.**

Possible final answer: The tall, thin plumber rushed breathlessly and excitedly into the small, neighborhood hardware store.

Example: Variation: Expansion With Guide Words. (For students who catch on slowly or for whom practice with a particular structure is needed, the use of clue words may be desirable.)

Kernel sentence: **The girl won.**

1. **Expand to show how the girl won. (by)**
2. **Expand to show which girl won. (who)**
3. **Expand to tell what the girl won. (what)**
4. **Expand to describe what the girl won. (which)**

Possible final answer: By running much faster than her competition, the girl who had practiced hard won the first prize, which was a shining, silver trophy.

Sentence Combining. Have students write one sentence about a topic. Write two. Write three. Have them combine these three sentences. Then have them try sentences about two or more topics and show the relationship or lack of it between the two.

Word/Sentence Movability. Reorganize sentences by changing the placement of movable words, or groups of words, within a sentence. The student decides which placements not only reflect his or her meaning correctly, but also produce the intended emphasis or coherence with adjacent sentences.

Example:

1. Columbus crossed the wide Atlantic to find a new route to the Indies.

or

2. To find a new route to the Indies, Columbus crossed the wide Atlantic.

Example: To develop awareness of trite adjectives, make a ditto of overused adjectives in phrases. Ask students orally to replace trite adjectives with more colorful adjectives. After a few examples, pair students to complete the phrases on the ditto. On chalkboard or overhead transparency, construct a list of colorful adjectives for each trite example. Students may copy these lists in their writing journals. Now assign two adjectives to each pair of students. Have them write one sentence for each phrase, substituting one of the colorful adjectives. Then ask each pair of students to make a poster depicting the trite adjective, the list of colorful replacements, and their use in original sentences. Display posters in the classroom.

Example: When word choice is repetitive or too vague, direct students to practice slotting; that is, replace such general words as nice, pretty good, a lot, fun, etc., with more specific words. Have the class orally develop lists of replacement words for those general words most commonly used. Have students place these lists on large wall posters as composition aids.

Example: To help students generate alternative word choices, give them a paragraph in which one general word is used repeatedly. Ask students to substitute a more specific word in each case. A sample paragraph follows:

It was a nice day in October. Nancy and Jane had on their nice, new dresses. It was a very nice walk to Barbara's house. They both carried packages nicely wrapped in nice paper. Barbara's house had nice flowers in front of it. The other children were already there when Nancy and Jane arrived. They were playing a nice game in Barbara's nicely decorated playroom. The gifts were nicely arranged on the table. Each one used nice manners as she sat down for cake and the nice drinks Barbara's mother offered. The girls sang "Happy Birthday" nicely. On the way home Nancy said to Jane, "Didn't we have a nice time?"

Ask students to underline every repetition of nice or nicely. Have students suggest more interesting replacement words. Make a list on the chalkboard. Direct students to use words from the list to replace every nice or nicely in the paragraph. Write the noun from the "nice" phrase beside the replacement. Example:

It was a nice day in October.

nice day	crisp	clear
brisk day	fragrant	leisurely
sparkling day	sunny	colorful

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES RELATED TO REVISING

Introduction

This stage allows students to "resee" their text from the point of view of themselves as first readers and of others who will serve as audience for their text, and to promote the higher-level thinking skills that are inherent requirements to complete this stage.

If students are reading a first draft, you may want them to focus only on the criteria for content and organization and delay attention to the conventions of language, such as spelling and punctuation. For final drafts, you may want them to see the "New Jersey HSPT Writing Checklist" or Appendix F, "A Writer's Reflection on the Writing Process." In addition, make up special individualized checklists that include specific skills that should be practiced during this assignment, e.g., use of logical transitions, well-constructed sentences, vivid verbs. To facilitate revision, assign students to peer response groups. Limit the group size to four, and try to balance the strengths and weaknesses of the members. Before peer groups begin working on each other's papers, establish the ground rules, and prepare them psychologically by preparing a response guide to take them through the process; or model the process by conducting whole class discussion of one or more papers that were not written by a member of the class. Put the text on an overhead, or prepare ditto copies. Use the response guide as the basis for discussion. As the peer groups begin to work, circulate and participate in the groups to model appropriate behavior.

To assist you in handling the paper load and assessing students' growth and change in writing over time, use a writing folder system. Allow students to generate initial drafts of three different texts over a two- to three-week period. While students are drafting Paper B, Paper A is going through the peer response group. While they are drafting Paper C, Paper B is going through the process; and Paper A is available for a first revision that will receive peer response. After all three drafts and first revisions have been read by the peer groups, the student selects one to revise and submit for evaluation. The student also attaches an explanation for his or her choice of this paper instead of one of the others. Remember that it is more important that students write often than that you respond in writing to every piece.

Example: Spidering is a technique used during the revising stage in the writing process. When students "spider", they add, delete, and/or correct drafts by taping, pasting, and/or cutting in order to refine their piece in progress.

Materials: scissors, pencils, assorted colored paper, tape, paste, and drafts of students' work.

1. Teacher/trainer writes a first draft on topic of choice. Photocopy to distribute, or present as an overhead to students.

2. Read students a first draft of your (teacher, trainer) writing. Students follow along. Ask for students'

suggestions, opinions, etc., to help make your piece better.

3. As students respond, clarify with them how the piece could be changed to make it more clear. Demonstrate to the class how you will revise the piece by actually cutting, adding, or changing the content using scissors, tape, and other materials. Explain that this is a strategy adults often use to make the meaning of ther essay more clear for their intended audience.

4. Remind students that you may "complete" (revise) the "spidering" technique, then go back and revise again, and finally edit the piece several times before completion.

5. Distribute a sample of one student's work. (Students self-select their writing samples for this activity). Have the class form groups and practice spidering with their group. Read each group's final draft, and discuss differences in final products. The group could be taught to score their collaborative piece on the criteria for organization of content and then make group decisions about how they could go about raising the score. They should focus on one salient feature at a time. (This activity would come after the class had had an explanation of how the compositions are corrected on the HSPT.)

6. Have students practice modeling using a first draft of their own work. Conference individually, with a peer, or in small groups.

NOTE: If this activity appears too difficult to handle in a large group, perhaps smaller student groups may achieve the same results. One group of five or so students could do this activity while the other students are working on their drafts for folders.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES RELATED TO EDITING

Introduction

The editing stage in the writing process allows students to revisit the text applying standards of written, edited English. At this stage, the students recognize that editing is essential to communicating their ideas clearly and learn to attend to the conventions of the language. Their considerations may range from massive changes at the level of the paragraph, to phrase and word changes and correction of spelling, usage, and punctuation, depending on the topic, form, and age of the writer.

Address the editing stage using diagnostic information from tests and the student's writing to identify skill needs. In addition, help students recognize the most frequently tested HSPT skills on editing, usage, and sentence construction: correct use of pronouns as subjects and objects; agreement of subject and predicate; agreement of verb tenses; use of comparative and superlative; use of parallel structure; run- ons and fragments; confusion of model verb with preposition (e.g., should have vs. of); confusion of conjunctions and participles (e.g., because vs. being); confusion of homonyms (e.g., to, there, etc.); use of apostrophe for contractions vs. possessive pronoun; correct capitalization of proper names, region vs. direction; and the spelling of words (e.g., appreciate, restaurant, and facilities).

Example: Create an editing checklist that addresses all of the needs reflected in the class, but target no more than three skills per student. Work on those until they are mastered. Then move on to a new set. Do not penalize students for any but the targeted skills and previously mastered skill sets. When a new skill is introduced, explain the operation, model its use, and provide guided practice. Make it the skill of the week, and provide examples on the bulletin board. Have students develop sample sentences for the class to practice. Encourage "silly" sentences that still require the skill.

Example: Newspaper hunt. This can be a single person activity, used with a partner, or in small groups.

a. Have students make a list of the different rules of capitalization.

b. Ask students to hunt through a newspaper or magazine for examples to illustrate each rule.

c. Have students cut out the examples and mount them with tape or rubber cement on poster board.

d. Have students write out the rules for each example and mount each rule with the example.

The activity can be used with other forms of punctuation: comma, semicolon, quotation marks.

*Source: Helping Student Writers. (1980).

APPENDIX A

SKILL ARRAY: PRIMARY & INTERMEDIATE

BENCHMARK SKILLS

CURRICULUM BENCHMARKS AT PRIMARY AND INTERMEDIATE GRADE LEVELS

WRITING CLUSTER: SENTENCE STRUCTURE

The skills identified in this array are important in the development of a broad-based curriculum. This array is intended as a guide and not as an all inclusive curriculum. However, these are the skills which students should master to succeed on the ninth grade test.

SKILL AREA	SKILL AREA EXAMINED AT PRIMARY GRADE LEVEL	SKILL AREA EXAMINED AT INTERMEDIATE GRADE LEVEL
I. Sentence Structure		
1. The student will be able to combine information into a well-written sentence using standard written English.	X	X
2. The student will be able to construct sentences using appropriate coordinating and subordinating ideas in the sentence.		X
3. The student will be able to use transitions to demonstrate an understanding of chronology, cause and effect and comparison and contrast.		X
4. The student, at his or her own level, will be able to identify and correct errors in sentence construction:		
a. The student will be able to use verbs correctly and consistently.	X	X
b. The student will be able to use standard written usage.	X	X
c. The student will be able to avoid sentence fragments and run-on sentences.	X	X
d. The student will be able to use pronouns correctly and consistently.	X	X
e. The student will be able to place modifiers and modifying phrases properly.	X	X
f. The student will be able to use comparative words correctly.	X	X
g. The student will be able to use parallel structure correctly.	X	X

CURRICULUM BENCHMARKS AT PRIMARY AND INTERMEDIATE GRADE LEVELS

WRITING **CLUSTER:** **ORGANIZATION OF IDEAS**

The skills identified in this array are important in the development of a broad-based curriculum. This array is intended as a guide and not as an all inclusive curriculum. However, these are the skills which students should master to succeed on the ninth grade test.

SKILL AREA	SKILL AREA EXAMINED AT PRIMARY GRADE LEVEL	SKILL AREA EXAMINED AT INTERMEDIATE GRADE LEVEL
II. Organization of Ideas		
1. The student will be able to generate a written response to a topic that requires the student to reflect on personal experiences and ideas.	X	X
2. The student will be able to write unified paragraphs.	X	X
3. The student will be able to organize information in a variety of ways:	X	X
a. chronological sequence b. classification system c. cause and effect d. comparison and contrast		
4. The student will be able to use language that expresses his or her purpose and addresses his or her audience.	X	X
5. The student will be able to select examples and details which support a main idea (general statement).	X	X
6. The student will be able to write a general statement (main idea) for a set of related details.	X	X
7. The student will be able to eliminate information which does not belong in a paragraph.	X	X

CURRICULUM BENCHMARKS AT PRIMARY AND INTERMEDIATE GRADE LEVELS

WRITING CLUSTER: EDITING

The skills identified in this array are important in the development of a broad-based curriculum. This array is intended as a guide and not at an all inclusive curriculum. However, these are the skills which students should master to succeed on the ninth grade test.

SKILL AREA	SKILL AREA EXAMINED AT PRIMARY GRADE LEVEL	SKILL AREA EXAMINED AT INTERMEDIATE GRADE LEVEL
III. Editing		
1. The student will be able to revise his or her own writing and edit the writing of others.	X	X
2. The student, at his or her own level, will be able to identify and correct errors in mechanics:		
a. spelling	X	X
b. punctuation	X	X
c. capitalization	X	X

CURRICULUM BENCHMARKS AT PRIMARY AND INTERMEDIATE GRADE LEVELS

WRITING CLUSTER: WRITING SAMPLE

The skills identified in this array are important in the development of a broad-based curriculum. This array is intended as a guide and not as an all inclusive curriculum. However, these are the skills which students should master to succeed on the ninth grade test.

SKILL AREA	SKILL AREA EXAMINED AT PRIMARY GRADE LEVEL	SKILL AREA EXAMINED AT INTERMEDIATE GRADE LEVEL
IV. The student will be able to generate a written response to a topic that requires him or her to reflect on personal experiences and ideas.	X	X

APPENDIX B

WRITING SKILLS ASSESSED ON THE NINTH GRADE HSPT

REPORT OF THE WRITING COMMITTEE

A test content committee for writing composed of members representing elementary, secondary and higher education; boards of education; business people and parents was convened in 1983 to assist the department in identifying the skills to be tested on the High School Proficiency Test. The skills reflect the Commissioner's charge to the committee that the HSPT test be more rigorous than the Minimum Basic Skills (MBS) test and that it help to establish higher educational standards in the state. The skills and competencies tested are those a student needs in grade nine in order to ultimately become a productive citizen in our society.

The content area committee, at its numerous meetings throughout the winter and spring of 1983, discussed and debated the unique problems inherent in administering a high school graduation test at the ninth grade level. Among its deliberations were the selection of evaluation criteria to determine which skills should be measured by the new test. Each skill area was considered for inclusion using the following criteria:

- Is the skill perceived to be important for all students to master?
- Is the skill likely to be taught and mastered by the end of grade nine?
- Is the skill important, but more likely to be taught and/or mastered after grade nine?
- Is the skill more appropriate for testing at primary and intermediate grade levels?
- Is the skill a recurring one to be tested using more sophisticated and complex problems and/or materials?

The writing committee emphasized the importance of writing across the curriculum and in all discipline areas and recommended that the writing test include a student writing sample as well as a multiple-choice section. Recognizing the importance of testing writing skills by actually having students write, the committee recommended that the essay portion of the test comprise 60 percent of the total writing score while the multiple choice section be weighted at 40 percent of the total.

Although the writing test is administered only to ninth graders, local districts should recognize their responsibility to monitor students' written language fluency in the primary and intermediate grades in order to prepare them for the grade nine test. Districts should assess student writing at all grade levels. This monitoring of student writing ability provides information about students' progress and an "early warning" of writing weaknesses.

The writing panel stressed that students should write frequently and for a variety of purposes and audiences. Much of younger students' writing is based on personal experience and self-expression. Since frequent experience in writing is essential for the development of students' writing skills, teachers are encouraged to use student journals, free writing exercises, and other writing activities which may or may not be graded. Students should be encouraged to generate a topic, plan a piece of writing, write and revise.

Regular experience in writing will increase students' confidence about writing and their competence. Writing in all content areas should be encouraged. Most of all, writing should be presented to students as more than a means of exhibiting knowledge or skill; it should be presented as a means of understanding one's self and one's world. Writing is a process of discovery.

Although the components of good writing are the same at every grade level, individual students differ in their levels of maturity. Some students will be able to make use of these components in their writing before others. The best measure of students' writing is the actual papers that students write. Therefore, teachers at all grade levels are encouraged to look to that source for information about their students.

WRITING SKILLS ASSESSED ON THE HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY TEST

I. **Sentence Structure**

a. Select a sentence revision that corrects an error in sentence construction.

b. Combine ideas into a well-constructed sentence.

c. Select words that complete a partially constructed sentence. Reconstruct the sentence.

d. Select transition words to complete a paragraph.

e. Identify the error within a sentence containing a usage error.

II. **Organization of Ideas**

a. Select the main idea for a paragraph.

b. Select a detail that supports a main idea.

c. Identify a detail inappropriate to the main idea.

d. Reorganize sets of sentences into a logical order.

III. **Editing**

a. Proofread and identify a mechanical error in a writing sample.

b. Identify mechanical errors in a writing sample and select appropriate corrections.

IV. **Writing Sample**

a. Write an essay on a stated topic. The student will be able to generate a written response to a topic that requires him or her to reflect on personal experiences and ideas.

GENERAL CONDITIONS USED TO CONSTRUCT TEST ITEMS

WRITING CLUSTER I: Sentence Structure

The description of conditions and the context in which each writing skill will be assessed on the HSPT provides information that will be useful in the planning and presentation of instructional programs. It is imperative that all staff members be familiar with these skills as the children progress through the grades.

SKILL AREA	CONDITIONS USED TO CONSTRUCT TEST ITEM
I. Sentence Structure Overview The student will be able to demonstrate knowledge of sentence structure by selecting sentence revisions which illustrate clarity of expression and appropriate knowledge of: A) subordination and coordination B) the correct use of modifiers C) correct use of standard English The student will be able to identify and correct errors in sentence construction:	
1. The student will be able to use verbs correctly and consistently.	
2. The student will be able to use standard written usage.	
3. The student will be able to avoid sentence fragments and run-on sentences.	
4. The student will be able to use pronouns correctly and consistently.	
5. The student will be able to place modifiers and modifying phrases properly.	
6. The student will be able to use comparative words correctly.	
7. The student will be able to use parallel structure correctly.	

WRITING CLUSTER I: Sentence Structure

SKILL AREA	CONDITIONS USED TO CONSTRUCT TEST ITEM
I. **SENTENCE STRUCTURE**	Sentence structure will be assessed using the following five conditions:
A. Select a sentence revision that corrects an error in sentence construction.	A. Given a sentence which may contain an error in sentence construction, the student will read the sentence and select the best correction from four possible choices. NOTE: 1. The error may be related to a word, a phrase or a full sentence. 2. The error within the sentence will be underlined. 3. The underlined word will be repeated as the first answer choice.
B. Combine ideas into a well-constructed sentence	B. Given several stated ideas, the student will read each idea and select the sentence which most effectively combines the information into a well-constructed sentence. NOTE: Discriminate between levels of difficulty for test items and internally structured items to reflect variety: 1. items in a series 2. compound sentences 3. phrases and clauses within sentences

CLUSTER I: Sentence Structure

SKILL AREA	CONDITIONS USED TO CONSTRUCT TEST ITEM
I SENTENCE STRUCTURE (continued)	
C. Select words that complete a partially constructed sentence. Reconstruct the sentence.	C. Given a sentence and a partial new construction of that sentence, the student will read what is given and select the words that correctly complete the newly constructed sentence. NOTE: The partial new construction of the given sentence will be underlined.
D. Select transition words to complete a paragraph.	D. Given a writing sample (a sentence or a paragraph), the student will read the writing sample and demonstrate an understanding of the relationship of ideas by selecting from four alternatives the appropriate transition for each incomplete sentence. NOTE: Test items will be structured to reflect: 1. comparison and contrast 2. cause and effect 3. chronology
E. Identify the error within a sentence containing a usage error.	E. Given a writing sample (a sentence or a paragraph) which may contain an error of usage, the student will read the writing sample and select the incorrect item. NOTE: The errors within the sentence or paragraph will be underlined.

CLUSTER II: Organization of Ideas

SKILL AREA	CONDITIONS USED TO CONSTRUCT TEST ITEM
II. ORGANIZATION OF IDEAS	
A. Select the main idea for a paragraph. The student will be able to select the best general statement (main idea) for a given set of related ideas.	A. Given a set of related ideas presented in paragraph format, the student will read the paragraph and select from four statements the most appropriate general statement (main idea) for that paragraph.
B. Select a detail that supports a main idea. The student will be able to substantiate a general statement (main idea) by selecting the appropriate statement of supporting detail.	B. Given a main idea presented in sentence format, the student will read the sentence and select from four possible supporting details that statement which best supports the main idea.
C. Identify a detail inappropriate to the main idea. The student will be able to relate details that substantiate a general statement (main idea) and identify details inappropriate to the main idea.	C. Given a set of related ideas presented in paragraph format, the student will read the paragraph and select from four statements the most inappropriate general statement (main idea).
D. Reorganize sets of sentences into a logical order. The student will be able to reorganize a set of ideas into a logical arrangement.	D. Given a set of sentences organized in a random manner, the student will read each sentence and logically reorganize the stated ideas by selecting from four sets of sentence combinations that set which most accurately constitutes a logical arrangement. NOTE: Test items will be structured to reflect: 1. time sequence 2. classification

CLUSTER III: Editing

SKILL AREA	CONDITIONS USED TO CONSTRUCT TEST ITEM
III EDITING	
A. Proofread and identify a mechanical error in a writing sample. The student will be able to proofread for the purpose of identifying common mechanical mistakes -- capitalization, punctuation and spelling.	A. Given a sample of writing (a sentence or a paragraph) that may contain mechanical errors, the student will read the writing sample and recognize the error from four underlined choices.
B. Identify mechanical errors in a writing sample and select appropriate corrections. The student will be able to proofread and identify common mechanical mistakes -- capitalization, punctuation and spelling.	B. Given a sample of writing (a sentence or a paragraph) that may contain mechanical errors, the student will read the writing sample and recognize the error from four underlined choices and select the appropriate correction for the given error.

NOTE:

Spelling Word Source:
Students' Essays - Field Test
(fall administration)
Students' Essays - HSPT
(spring administration)

The errors within the sentence or paragraph will be underlined.

APPENDIX C

TEACHING-LEARNING-ASSESSING

SEQUENCE CHARTS FOR PROGRAM AND STUDENT INSTRUCTIONAL TRACKING IN WRITING

Analyzing and interpreting standardized and teacher-made test results are essential practices if teachers are to tailor instruction in written language to student needs. Using both formal and informal assessment to determine the strengths and weaknesses of both program and student progress is an important step in assuring students' acquisition of writing as a learning mode. Success at acquiring the skills of written communication as a mode of learning can help students not only to access other curriculum areas, but also to assess and contribute to societal-related demands before and following graduation from our schools.

To assist teachers in this programmatic and instructional task, Benchmark Skills in writing, reflecting the skills that are developmental requisites for student success on the High School Proficiency Test (HSPT), are identified at various grade levels (primary and intermediate). (See Skill Array, NJSDE, 1983). In addition to the Benchmark Skills, HSPT test results contain valuable information in the form of Individual Student Reports (ISR) and Student Item Response Rosters (SIRR). The advantage of the SIRR report is that it allows a teacher to locate any student's test results without referring to the student's Individual Student Report. The roster also allows the teacher to scan for group strengths and needs across the three test clusters - sentence structure, organization of ideas, and editing - to determine students' needs from test items and distraction answer choices. Error-analysis of distraction answer choices is useful for planning lessons focused on students' selection of an incorrect response over the correct test answer response. Students who do not meet a given level of writing proficiency need direct instructional assistance. The first step in this process must be that of recognizing that students need help, focusing instruction on the need, and acting on the students' behalf based upon the information the test was designed to provide. The information that follows is designed to help teachers recognize, focus, and act in response to student needs.

To ensure that student needs are identified and skills are taught, Charts I and II on pages 61-65 may prove useful. Chart I may be used for program instructional tracking and Chart II for tracking individual students or groups of students. Chart I assumes all students need to be reintroduced, reinforced, and reassessed with respect to an array of skills. The chart is used to help the teacher concentrate on program planning, that is, on planning instruction to address the greatest need. The greatest need is where the greatest number of children missed an item on a formal test instrument or where teacher observation detects the need in written work. Chart II, in contrast, is designed to meet the program and instructional needs of individual students or groups of students in written communication. Use this chart to identify student-specific instructional needs, program material, instructional time-on-task, and alternative assessment measures to determine students' success in learning a skill that has been introduced, reinforced, and extended through practice.

Finally, three last points:

- Divide the instructional periods between September and April to accommodate these skills. Do whole-class instruction daily by teaching, reteaching, and reinforcing each skill and reassessing every four to six weeks. This will help to assure constant mastery.

  It is important to provide this instruction before the test is administered, when the High School Proficiency Test will be given and count toward the students' graduation requirements.

- Teach the skill to the students the way it is tested. The Directory of Test Specifications is included in the test materials returned to the school districts.

- If a textbook is used as the instructional resource, the teacher should check the appendix to see if the skill tested on the HSPT is presented as it is on the test. If not, the teacher should modify instruction to teach the skill as it will be tested. If the text omits the skill, the teacher should seek supplemental material. Supplemental materials may be available from district personnel (i.e., reading, math, and writing supervisors); curriculum directors; remedial subject specialists; or outside resources, such as regional curriculum service unit trainers; or specialists from state professional associations.

DIRECTIONS TO COMPLETE THE TEACHING-LEARNING-ASSESSING SEQUENCE CHART FOR PROGRAM INSTRUCTIONAL TRACKING: (SEE CHART 1).

1. **Cluster/Skill** - List the cluster and skill(s) being assessed in the first two boxes. Start with the greatest need first.

   To determine program needs, educators should analyze students' test results on both informal and formal measures, such as those obtained from the High School Proficiency Test. An additional source of information is the New Jersey Statewide Testing System's Skill Array (NJSDE, 1983) containing writing skills benchmarked at the primary, intermediate, and secondary grade levels.

2. **Textbook Reference** - Check the subject textbook, and list those pages where the skill is taught. Verify that the skill is presented in the same manner as it is tested. Adapt instruction if necessary. If the skill is not in the textbook, leave the column blank, and seek supplemental resources immediately.

3. **Audiovisual Material** - Identify the district's audiovisual materials, including computer software and video cassette programs that are available and applicable. Audiovisual material may assist instruction.

4. **Test Reference** - Provide test reference by stating the skill test number and a sample test item. This will provide easy access to how the skill is tested. Reminder: Teach the skill the way it is tested.

5. **Instructional Delivery** - Use this column to keep a record of instruction, using **I** to indicate when the skill is initiated or taught; **R** to indicate when the skill is reinforced or extended through in-class assignments or homework (reteaching is based on the results of student assignments); and **M** to indicate when the skill has been mastered. Use items from the High School Proficiency Test, as well as questions developed in the format of those items, to assess student progress following introduction and reinforcement.

   The mini-assessment should be cumulative, including previously taught skills, to be sure what was first taught in September has been mastered. This will ensure student success on similar test items on the High School Proficiency Test.

6. **Allotted Time** - Determine how many minutes equal an instructional period, and establish how much class time must be spent to assure student level mastery. This information is a "pacing guide" of skill introduction, teacher and student interaction, and skill master.

7. **Date(s)** - Use this space to record when **I**, **R**, and **M** occurred with respect to student progress.

FOR STUDENT INSTRUCTIONAL TRACKING, SEE CHART 2.

CHART 1

BENCHMARK SKILLS

TEACHING - LEARNING - ASSESSING SEQUENCE CHART

FOR PROGRAM INSTRUCTIONAL TRACKING

Date: _____ Subject: _____ Teacher: _____

Cluster/Skill	Textbook Reference	Audio-Visual Material	Test Reference and Sample Test Item	Instructional Delivery I R M	Allotted Time Class Periods	Date(s)

DIRECTIONS TO COMPLETE THE TEACHING-LEARNING-ASSESSING SEQUENCE CHART FOR STUDENT INSTRUCTIONAL TRACKING: (See Chart 2)

1. **Student Name/Initial** - The Student Roster lists all students tested in descending total score order by subject and school. Select the appropriate roster (Writing) for your (School). Since scores are in descending order, work from the bottom up to identify students in need of special instructional help. In the column Student Name/Initial, list the students. It is important to identify and rank order the skill areas of greatest need for the greatest number of students.

   The Student Item Response Roster (SIRR), as mentioned on page 59, can also be used to identify a student or groups of students who need special in-class or out-of-class instruction and/or tutoring by a subject specialist. Chart 2 can be photocopied to meet the program and instructional needs of these students, e.g., individual or class folders; parent reports; transmittal forms between instructors; ongoing, across-grade tracking; permanent record folders, etc.

2. **Cluster/Skills** - Use this space to identify the HSPT skill need among a group of students and to record each student's progress with respect to this major skill. Prerequisite or subskills can also be identified here. With respect to the essay, use the criteria of the Registered Holistic Scoring Method - organization/ content, sentence construction, usage, and mechanics. See The Registered Holistic Scoring Method for Scoring Student Essays (NJSDE, 1985) for criteria specifics.

3. **Textbook Reference** - Provide a record of the page(s) assigned to students to reinforce a skill that has been introduced. An **X** can be used to verify students' completion of an assignment.

4. **Audiovisual Material** - Record computer software, video cassette programs, etc., in this column. An **X** can be used to verify student(s) completion of a given program.

5. **Test Reference** - Provide test reference by stating the skill test number and a sample test item. This will provide easy access to how the skill is tested. Other tests may also be identified in this section. Reminder: Teach the skill the way it is tested.

6. **Instructional Delivery** - Use this column to keep a record of instruction, using **I** to indicate when the skill is initiated or taught; **R** to indicate when the skill is reinforced or extended through in-class assignments or homework (reteaching is based on the results of student assignments); and **M** to indicate when the skill has been mastered. Use items from the High School Proficiency Test, as well as questions developed in the format of those items, to assess student progress following introduction and reinforcement.

   The mini-assessment should be cumulative, including previously taught skills, to be sure what was first taught in September has been mastered. This will ensure student success on similar test items on the High School Proficiency Test.

7. **Allotted Time/Date(s)** - Determine how many minutes equal an instructional period, and establish how much class time must be spent to assure student level mastery. This information is a "pacing guide" of skill introduction, teacher and student interaction, and skill mastery. Use this space to date and comment on student progress.

CHART 2

BENCHMARK SKILLS

TEACHING - LEARNING - ASSESSING SEQUENCE CHART

FOR PROGRAM INSTRUCTIONAL TRACKING

Date: _____ Subject: _____ Teacher: _____

Student Name/ Initial	Cluster/Skill	Textbook Reference	Audio-Visual Material	Test Reference and Sample Test Item	Instructional Delivery I R M	Allotted Time Class Periods Date(s)	Date(s)

9937j

A RELATED DIAGNOSTIC MEASURE OF WRITING ABILITY USING THE STUDENT ESSAYS AND THE REGISTERED HOLISTIC SCORING METHOD

The best related diagnostic measure of students' command of the written language is a writing sample. Student essays are the best measure of students' ability to generate written language. Therefore, teachers at grades four through six, as well as all other grade levels, are encouraged to examine this source of information about their students. The test results and additional samples of students' writing provide indicators that can be used to establish standards for acceptable writing at specific grade levels.

An analysis of the essays alongside a recognized set of scoring criteria, such as the Registered Holistic Scoring Method, can yield data about individual students, as well as reveal how the top, middle, and lower-level groups of writers write when required to compose an essay on demand. Since growth in student writing takes place over time, teachers need to apply the same score criteria to multiple samples of student writing. The series of questions below can be used to help analyze students' writing and standardize the results obtained. Note that the questions are directly linked to the criteria of the Registered Holistic Scoring Method. Use the criteria to establish questions such as the following:

ORGANIZATION/CONTENT

- What organizational patterns have been chosen by the writers? Can they all establish a focus for their papers? Do the papers have beginnings? Do they have endings? Are the papers cluttered with irrelevant information? Do they progress logically from beginning to end? Are transitions appropriate and varied?
- How many students appear able to express themselves on a given topic? How many find it difficult to write on a given topic?
- Are key ideas developed with appropriate and varied details? Are the responses highy effective and vivid?

USAGE

- Do students use words that are grammatically correct?
- Does the word usage reflect appropriate tense form and sequence, proper pronoun case, correct use of negatives, pronoun agreement, use of proper modifiers, as well as subject-verb agreement?
- Are the word choices appropriate to the context of the response? Are they vivid, rich, and meaningful?

SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION

- Is a variety of sentence types used by the writers? What types of sentence construction do they use? Are the statements incoherent, unintelligible, fragmented, repetitive, or rambling?

MECHANICS

- What is the impact of the mechanical errors in the papers? Does any pattern emerge with respect to spelling, capitalization, and punctuation?

From the answers to these and other questions, district staff can determine a great deal about their programs. For example, perhaps most of the writers in a given grade school fail to use descriptive detail. Is this because the skill is not part of the writing program? Is it because the students cannot apply it to their own writing? Perhaps they are taught various methods of sentence construction, but they cannot apply their knowledge to their own papers.

Although the HSPT writing test (essay component) is administered only to high school students, local districts should recognize their responsibility to monitor students' written language fluency in the primary and intermediate grades in order to prepare them for the high school test. Districts should assess student writing at all grades. The Registered Holistic Scoring Method is appropriate for use with students in grade four and up, and the same topic used for the HSPT may be used by students in the upper elementary grades. This monitoring of student writing ability in the primary and intermediate grades will produce information about students' progress in writing and will provide an "early warning" of students' needs. For further information regarding this scoring method, the score point criteria, and their use, see The Registered Holistic Scoring Method for Scoring Student Essays (Bloom, 1985).

APPENDIX D

DICTATION: AN INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY FOR EDITING

DICTATION: AN INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY FOR EDITING

What Is Dictation?

Dictation is a simple exercise in writing which pays big dividends for both students and the teacher. It is a procedure in which a teacher reads or dictates a sentence or a two- to three-sentence paragraph, and the students write it exactly as expressed by the teacher.

Benefits of Dictation

1. Dictation provides a medium for reviewing and reinforcing numerous writing skills.

2. Dictation helps develop better listening skills. With only the ear as a guide, students must listen for clues to punctuation, spelling, verb and subject agreement, and the like. It raises students' consciousness.

3. Dictation helps to develop more coherent writing. Students get a feel for the structure of a sentence or paragraph by hearing and then writing a logically structured sequence of words or sentences.

4. Dictation helps to remind teachers to speak clearly, distinctly, and expressively.

How Is Dictation Used?

1. Select or compose a sentence or short paragraph to be read or told to the students.

   A. Include in the passage any skills to be reinforced.

   B. Be certain these skills have been previously taught or introduced.

   *As a variation, students can compose sentences which could be used.

2. Set standards by which dictation format is to proceed.

   A. Session is to be short, with no more than 10 minutes from start to finish.

   B. Students are to listen and write only; neither talking, nor asking for spelling hints, etc.

   C. Proceed at a reasonable pace, neither too slow nor too fast, thus encouraging students to be attentive and to keep up.

3. Establish a procedure for checking students' papers.

   A. Inform students they will be given a point for each correct item. You are making an effort to encourage students for what they know.

   B. Dictate sentence to students.

   C. Have students exchange their papers.

   D. Write the sentence on blackboard.

   E. Read the sentence aloud to students. Have members of the class tell what capitals, punctuation, etc., are needed. Ask why? This reinforces specific rules.

   F. Allocate points to emphasize the sections of the sentence.

   G. Keep a record of students' dictations in order to assess progress over a period of time.

Sample Dictation

1. Sentence for dictation: Mrs. Jones said, "Hang on, folks. We're almost done!"

2. Procedure for checking: Points can be given as follows:

```
1  1 1          1 11       1       1  1 1       1        11
Mrs. Jones said, "Hang on, folks.  We're almost done!"
```

In this sample sentence:

```
Mrs.        = 1 point for capital M
   .        = 1 point for period
Jones       = 1 point for capital J
said,       = 1 point for comma after "said"
"           = 1 point for quotation marks before H
Hang        = 1 point for capital H
,           = 1 point for comma after "on"
! or .      = 1 point for period or 1 point for exclamation mark
W           = 1 point for capital W
'           = 1 point for apostrophe
almost      = 1 point for correct spelling
!           = 1 point for exclamation point
"           = 1 point for closing quotation mark
```

Total: 13 points

3. Skills reinforced in the sentence above include:

capital letters	punctuation
proper quotation usage	direct address
contractions	

Skills Effectively Reinforced Through Dictation

- capitalization
- punctuation
- spelling demons
- vocabulary
- parts of speech
- subject and verb agreement
- paragraphing
- sentence structure
- contractions
- plurals
- word endings
- penmanship
- homonyms
- commas in a series
- listening skills

Additional sample dictation sentences:

Vocabulary
Do you have a valid license, or has it been revoked?

Spelling
We received a new calendar today.

Verb Agreement
One of Tim's brothers is at Smith College.

Homonym
He stared at the girl when she fell down the stairs.

Punctuation
"It is better to have a hen tomorrow than an egg today,"
said Thomas Fuller.

Capitalization
My uncle went to high school in 1960.
My Uncle Bob went to Central High School in 1960.

*Suggested by Camden High School - Patricia A. Thompson, Don Garcia, Pat Nangle.

APPENDIX E

EXAMPLES OF BASIC TEXT STRUCTURES

EXAMPLES OF BASIC TEXT STRUCTURES

DESCRIPTION

Greece is a land of mountains and small valleys. The soil is full of rocks, and so farming is difficult. The people of Greece have always found it hard to grow enough food for everyone. On the other hand, no part of Greece is more than 85 miles (137 kilometers) from the sea. The coastline has many good harbors. Why do you think many Greeks turned to the sea in order to make a living?

TEMPORAL SEQUENCE

Artists have been using woodcuts to print pictures on paper since the 1400s. To begin making a woodcut, an artist first gets a pine block. The artist uses sharp tools to cut away parts of the wood. The parts that were not cut will form the picture. After the wood is cut, the artist coats the block with ink. Then he or she puts a piece of paper over the block. The artist rubs the back of a spoon or some other tool over the paper. Finally, the paper is pulled away from the block. A picture has been printed onto the paper. Now the woodcut is finished.

Source: **Bright and Beautiful, Focus**
Scott, Foresman, 1985

EXPLANATION

The beginning of city-states - By around 800 B.C., conditions in Greece had begun to improve. And by that time the city-state had begun to deveop in Greece. A city-state is a town or city that rules itself and the land around it. City-states came about in Greece for at least two reasons. One reason was the geography of Greece. The mountains kept the people who lived in the valleys separated from other people in Greece. How do you think this helped to bring about the growth of many city-states? A second reason was the fact that the people of each city-state were proud of their city and their way of life. Why do you think this would keep the city-states from uniting with another?

DEFINITION - EXAMPLE

The terms mass and weight are often thought to mean the same thing. But they do not have the same meaning. Weight is a measure of the force of gravity on an object. When we talk about weight, we usually mean the force of gravity between some object and the earth. The closer an object is to the earth, the more it weighs. So an object's weight is not always the same.

The mass of an object, however, is always the same. Mass is constant because the amount of matter in an object does not change. Look at the

astronaut in the picture. On the moon's surface he weighs less than he does on the earth. This is because the force of gravity on the moon is weaker than that on the earth. But the astronaut's mass on the moon is the same as his mass on the earth.

COMPARE - CONTRAST

Scientists are interested in whether a meteorite is a fall or a find. A find may have been exposed to rain, snow, heat, and cold for hundreds of years. Then its chemical make-up is changed. For example, the metal in a find could be rusted.

On the other hand, a freshly fallen meteorite will have nearly all of its original characteristics. A fresh sample is more likely to be useful to a scientist than one that is "weathered."

Source: **Clearing Paths**
Heath American Readers, 1986

PROBLEM - SOLUTION

During the winter, family after family is born into the lemming colony. Each mother lemming has several litters. There may be as many as eleven babies in a litter. In only a few weeks, these young lemmings start having babies of their own.

Then summer comes. The lemmings feast on grasses and leaves. More and more lemmings are born. In only a year or two, the colony becomes crowded. The food supply becomes scarce.

Now the lemmings in the colony are hungry all the time. The little rodents are no longer friendly. They quarrel and fight over what little food and space are left.

Then, as if by a signal, a few lemmings leave the colony. Others join them, and soon there are hundreds - and then thousands. A few stay behind, but most of the colony heads down the mountainside. Some scientists think they start their journey looking for food...

Those lemmings that stayed behind in their homes in the mountains are enjoying a good life. Since most of their neighbors are gone, they have plenty of room. Now there is enough food for all of them. They are busy having large families. And their children are having large families. The colony is growing very quickly again.

Source: **Clearing Paths**
Heath American Readers, 1986

TEXT UNITS AND COMMONLY ASSOCIATED WORDS AND PHRASES*

Description		
(This text unit is often not associated with particular words and phrases. There may be mention of characteristics, properties, features, traits, and functions; but they are not specifically signaled.		(to be) (to have) is a property of is a feature of is a characteristic of is part of
Temporal Sequence/Process	then, and then before after next follows earlier later finally	previously prior subsequently precedes afterwards first, second, third (dates)
Explanation	causes affects leads to in order to so that produces therefore	because enables since as a result (of) consequently thus for this reason
Compare/contrast	is similar to similarly like likewise in the same way is different from on the one hand	on the other hand however but although instead yet while
Definition/Examples	is defined as means that is named is called is labeled is referred to as that is for example	for instance type of kind of example of e.g. such as includes including
Problem/Solution	the problem is... the solution is...	

(This text unit is often not associated with particular words and phrases. There may be mention of problems or difficulties and there solutions or cures, but often the problems and solutions are not specifically signaled.)

*Source: Anderson, R.; Osborn, J.; & Tierney, R. (Eds.). (1984). Learning to read in America. Urbana-Champaign, IL: Erlbaum Associates.

APPENDIX F

A WRITER'S REFLECTION ON THE WRITING PROCESS

A WRITER'S REFLECTION ON THE WRITING PROCESS

PRE-WRITING

DID YOU:

- EXPLORE YOUR OWN THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS?
- VERBALIZE ALOUD OR USE A TAPE RECORDER?
- JOT DOWN IDEAS, MAKE NOTES, DRAW/DIAGRAM, OUTLINE, OR WEB?
- EXAMINE YOUR NOTES OR DRAWINGS TO DISCOVER A TOPIC?
- ASK YOURSELF "WHY AM I WRITING?" (PURPOSE)
- ASK YOURSELF "FOR WHOM AM I WRITING?" (AUDIENCE)
- GENERATE RELATED IDEAS?
- THINK ABOUT AUDIENCE AND PURPOSE AS YOU ORGANIZED YOUR IDEAS?
- LIST DETAILS FOR EACH IDEA?
- CONSIDER A CONCLUSION?

DRAFTING

DID YOU:

- BEGIN TO WRITE A SUSTAINED PIECE OF DISCOURSE?
- EXPRESS YOUR THOUGHTS IN WRITTEN LANGUAGE?
- STOP AND REFLECT ON WHAT YOU WROTE FOR THE PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE INTENDED?
- ANTICIPATE UP COMING PIECES OF TEXT? A CONCLUSION?
- REREAD YOUR DRAFT TO DISCOVER WHAT YOUR WRITING SAYS?
- HESITATE, PONDER, AND REFORMULATE YOUR THOUGHTS?
- FIND IDEAS OR DETAILS TO DEVELOP AND EXPLORE?

REVISING

DID YOU:

- REVISIT YOUR DRAFT AT DIFFERENT TIMES (AFTER YOU EXPANDED, SUBSTITUTED, DELETED, ETC., YOUR WRITING)?
- REVISIT YOUR DRAFT OVER DIFFERENT DAYS FOR PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE?
- READ YOUR DRAFT AND CONSIDER THE PURPOSE, AUDIENCE, CONTENT, AND THE ORGANIZATIONAL FORMAT YOU CHOSE?
- MAKE NECESSARY CHANGES THAT WILL IMPROVE THE INTENDED CONTENT AND LANGUAGE OF THE MESSAGE YOU ARE COMMUNICATING?
- DID YOU ADD, DELETE, SUBSTITUTE, AND REORDER IDEAS, PARAGRAPHS, SENTENCES, PHRASES, AND WORDS TO ELIMINATE CONFUSION?
- HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR INTENT OR FOCUS? DO THE IDEAS AND WORDS FIT YOUR NEW INTENT?

EDITING

DID YOU:

- REVISIT YOUR REVISED DRAFT A DAY OR SO LATER?
- CONSIDER AND POLISH YOUR WRITING FOR READER UNDERSTANDING OF YOUR INTENDED PURPOSE, AUDIENCE, TOPIC, CONTENT?
- CORRECT AND PROOFREAD YOUR WRITING FOR USAGE, MECHANICS, AND SPELLING?
- ASK A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER TO BE YOUR AUDIENCE AND READ YOUR WRITING FOR YOUR INTENDED MEANING?
- ASK YOUR READER TO SUMMARIZE YOUR WRITING? WAS THE SUMMARY ACCURATE? (IF NOT, WHAT WORD OR PHRASE NEEDS TO BE CHANGED?)
- ASK WHAT YOUR READER LIKED?

POST-WRITING

DID YOU:

- GIVE YOUR FINAL WRITING TO THE AUDIENCE TO WHOM IT WAS INTENDED?
- READ YOUR WRITING TO YOUNGER STUDENTS, FRIENDS, FAMILY?
- MAIL YOUR WRITING TO ANY CHILDREN'S MAGAZINE, NEWSPAPER, ETC., FOR PUBLICATIONS?
- MAKE A BOOK?
- CATALOG YOUR BOOK IN THE SCHOOL LIBRARY?
- CONSIDER MAKING YOUR WRITING INTO A PLAY, FILM STRIP, TELEVISION SHOW, PUPPET SHOW, ETC.?
- PLACE A COPY OF YOUR WORK OR THE ORIGINAL WRITING IN A "FINISHED" COMPOSITION FOLDER?

- THINK OF OTHER TOPICS, SUBJECTS, AUDIENCES, OR PURPOSEFUL CONTENT YOU WOULD LIKE TO WRITE ABOUT?

- GIVE YOUR WRITING TO YOUR TEACHER FOR SOME POSITIVE FEEDBACK?

- HAVE A SENSE OF YOUR OWN STRENGTHS AND NEEDS AS A WRITER WHO COMMANDS WRITTEN LANGUAGE?

GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY

Analytic Scoring -- a scoring method requiring readers to isolate particular composition characteristics such as topic, rhetorical mode (narration, persuasion, etc.), organization, fluency, etc., and judge each characteristic without being influenced by any other characteristic. Analytic scoring often is used when there is a need for specific discrete information about writers' strengths and weaknesses.

Assessment -- the process of describing the status of a student's writing ability at a particular time without value judgment.

Audience -- the reader of the written text. It can refer to the writer, as well as to others.

Brainstorming -- a prewriting activity that involves the open and uncritical sharing of ideas to generate and develop content for writing.

Climate -- the atmosphere surrounding the writer. A classroom climate conducive to writing is marked by trust, respect, supportiveness, suspension of judgment, and an enabling work environment.

Compositional Risks -- an attribute of the organization/content feature of the Registered Holistic Scoring Method. Compositional risks may include direct and indirect quotations; shifting roles; shifting times and events; varied sentence structure, such as "subject-not-first;" prepositional phrases, adverbial clauses, participal phrases, infinitive phrases, and compound predicates, etc.; and varied sentence lengths.

Conferencing -- a method of teaching writing in which student and instructor or student and peer(s) confer privately or in the classroom on writing in progress. The instructor and the peer(s) help the student discover, shape, and polish written ideas and finally edit them into a finished piece. Conferencing can also be an evaluation method that centers on student involvement within the evaluation process by ensuring student understanding of the criteria used to evaluate writing.

Context -- all the circumstances surrounding the act of writing. These include: the author's perceptions of purpose, topic, and the audience, as well as the author's perceptions of self as writer.

Descriptive Writing -- a traditional label for a rhetorical mode of communication that may be rooted in the expressive, transactional, or poetic functions of language. Depending on purpose, the writer may depict the features of an object, scene, place, or person in a variety of ways ranging from relatively objective reporting to rather selective description to convey a mood. Ideas are usually arranged in space order or order of importance.

Diagnosing -- the process of analyzing students' writing to identify strengths and needs so that the teacher can develop strategies to meet identified needs and improve student writing.

Discourse -- an extended verbal expression in speech and writing.

Drafting -- a stage of the writing process which precedes the revising and editing stages and results in a written draft. Students are encouraged to write with attention to purpose, audience, content, and organization during this stage.

Editing -- a stage of the writing process in which the writer polishes the writing for reader understanding. This stage involves correcting and proofreading the writing for usage, mechanics, and spelling. The editing stage follows the revising stage.

Essay -- sustained discourse reflecting the personal view of the author or student-writer.

Evaluation - the process of describing the student's writing ability at a particular time in reference to a standard and assigning a value to a performance. It involves judging the effectiveness of a process, product, or program, and may include recommending a preferred course of action.

Expository Writing -- a traditional label for a rhetorical mode of communication usually rooted in the expressive or transactional functions of language. This mode is considered academic writing, but it is also found in the workplace. Depending on purpose, the writer reports, discusses, explains, speculates, and/or evaluates a subject. Ideas are typically arranged in a hierarchy of superordinate and subordinate details that also can be arranged chronologically as in a supporting example.

Expressive Language -- an approach a student may use to produce written work and answer the question "Why Am I Writing?" It is a written language function closest to self and assumes a shared context and knowledge with an interested audience. This function serves as a link between speech and writing and is exhibited in journals and diaries.

Fictive/Creative Writing -- writing which requires the writer to step outside of personal experiences to compose through invention and imagination. Sometimes this writing begins in personal experience and then is embroidered with fantasy.

Holistic Scoring -- the reading of essay papers for an overall or "whole" impression of the papers by at least two trained readers. The basic premise of holistic scoring is that if scorers read each paper as a whole, they are better able to judge the competence of the writer in relationship to other writers responding to the same topic. The holistic scoring technique is based on the assumption that the overall quality of the writing is more important than the sum of its parts. (The Educational Testing Service and the National Assessment of Educational Progress are pioneers of this version of "pure" holistic scoring.)

Literacy -- the ability to read and write; interpreted differently in various contexts so that literacy for college students is quite different from literacy for immigrants.

Mode -- a form or type of written text. Representative modes include: narrative, expository, persuasive, argumentative, etc.

Narrative Writing -- a traditional label for a rhetorical mode of communication that may be rooted in the expressive, transactional, or poetic functions of language. Depending on purpose, the writer may recount a real event or fabricate an imagined story. Ideas are arranged chronologically from beginning to end, exemplified in media reports or in simultaneous accounts of events.

Peer Feedback -- the opportunity for peers to provide oral or written responses to an author about a piece of written discourse.

Persuasive Writing -- a traditional label for a rhetorical mode of communication rooted in the transactional function of language. The student-writer attempts to influence the behavior or ideas of an audience concerning some topic. Ideas may be arranged mainly in a hierarchy of superordinate and subordinate details, but some section of support may contain chronological ordering of ideas.

Poetic Language -- an approach a student may use to produce written work and answer the question, "Why Am I Writing?" It is written language in which how something is written is as important as what is said. A verbal artifact is created by using language to recount or recreate real or imagined events for no other reason than to enjoy it or present it for enjoyment.

Post-Writing -- the fifth essential stage of the recursive writing process. This stage serves a two-fold purpose by focusing on both the value of a given student's writing and the student's developmental strengths and needs as a writer. The recursiveness of the writing process is inherent at this stage because it can stimulate the student to write again.

Prewriting -- the first essential stage of the recursive writing process consists of the mental, verbal, and physical experiences that lead to the composing/drafting stage. Examples of prewriting experiences are: reflecting, discussing personal experiences, conducting experiments, experiencing in the form of field trips, and responding to what someone else has written. It may also include outlining, drawing/doodling, webbing, and notetaking.

Primary Trait -- a scoring method that identifies a dominant or primary characteristic for each writing task, and compositions are rated according to how well they fulfill the purpose of that particular task. For example descriptive essays might require detailed character descriptions while narrative essays may require a specific chronological order of events.

Process-Centered Approach -- an approach that teaches composing by focusing on some type of process, either within the student or related to an instructional sequence such as the five stages of prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and post-writing.

Product-Based Approach -- an approach that intends to assess the quality of students' writing and not intervene with but foster the process of writing. It is an approach suitable for selecting writing samples and applying scoring methods such as holistic, analytic, primary trait, and others.

Proofreading -- the final check during the editing stage to ensure that the product is free of errors.

Purpose -- the author's reason for writing. It addresses the "why" for the writing as opposed to the "what."

Recursive -- the quality of writing which is characterized by its cyclical nature. The stages and procedures in writing instruction may be repeated indefinitely or until a desired standard is attained. The steps in learning to write are all equally recursive.

Registered Holistic Scoring Method -- a large scale assessment scoring method developed by the New Jersey State Department of Education that is used by two independent readers to judge writers' command of written language on a 1 (inadequate command) to 6 (strong command) score scale. The features of the scoring guide criteria are: organization/content, usage, sentence construction, and mechanics. The first focus of raters is to the feature of organization/content, with a readjustment of that score according to the severity of errors or error patterns in usage, sentence construction, and/or mechanics.

Revising -- a process of discovery. Revising occurs when the writer revisits the text. During this third stage, the writer evaluates the content and form of the text and may reformulate the piece of writing.

Rhetorical Mode of Communication -- a heuristic or guideline which takes into account the relations among speaker-writer, audience, purpose, subject matter, and context in helping writers explore each of these aspects and formulate effective written or formal spoken communication.

Rhetorical Mode (Sentence Construction Criteria of the Registered Holistic Scoring Method) -- is a traditional label that may be rooted in the expressive, transactional, or poetic functions of language. When a person writes, a language user must first determine the purpose for writing (e.g., express, share, record, report, generalize, theorize, regulate, persuade, etc.), then select a dominant mode for achieving that purpose (eg. expressive, narrative, persuasive, etc.). However, to effectively accomplish that purpose, the writer should vary rhetorical modes within the syntax (sentences/paragraphs) of the essay. In other words, if the purpose for writing a particular essay is argumentative, some narrative, expressive, descriptive sentences would demonstrate the strength of the writer's command of written language in keeping with the purpose intended.

Transactional Language -- an approach a student may use to produce written work and answer the question, "Why Am I Writing?" It is a written language function that demands a different task from the writer since it is language to get things done. It is writing which informs, instructs, persuades, and carries on business.

T-Unit Analysis -- a scoring method that judges the maturity of the writer by dividing students' writing into T-Units (independent clauses with all their subordinate clauses or phrases) and analyzing them for length, number of words, etc. The method can also be used by having students combine a group of related T-Units into one or more sentences so that the maturity of the writer is judged by examining the syntactic complexity of the sentences produced. (Hunt, 1965).

Webbing -- a prewriting activity in which writers generate and group ideas and concepts in terms of their superordinate, coordinate, and subordinate relationships. Teachers involve students in webbing to help them plan writing -- to elaborate their ideas, to narrow them to a manageable topic, and to organize the subtopics. Webbing is also referred to as mapping or scaffolding.

Writing Mechanics Analysis -- a scoring method that is "error-focused" and offers no feedback on what is written, that is, context or organization. This method indicates errors in usage or mechanical conventions of standard English and is appropriate when the student is at a point in language development where attention to such matters is appropriate.

Writing Sample -- a piece of writing elicited periodically for the purpose of evaluation.

Written Discourse -- the sustained use of written language. Written discourse is synonymous with written text.

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DOCUMENTS PUBLISHED BY THE NEW JERSEY STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

This document is one of several produced by the New Jersey State Department of Education to respond to districts' identified needs for improved writing instruction. The Regional Curriculum Service Units (RCSUs) offer training to accompany these materials. Other writing documents published include:

- Staff Development Guide and Reference Handbook: New Jersey Statewide Writing Assessment Program (1983)

- Improving Writing Instruction A Process Approach - A Staff Training Manual for Use with the Maryland Instructional Television Series "Teaching Writing: A Process Approach" (1984)

- Writing in the Content Areas: A Guide for Instructional Improvement (1984)

- Understanding the Writing Process: Introducing Students to Composing (1985)

- The Registered Holistic Scoring Method for Scoring Student Essays (1985)

- The Registered Holistic Scoring Method for Scoring Student Essays: Scoring Guide for Training (1985)

- Writing As A Recursive Process (1986)

- Conferencing: Assessing Growth and Change in Student Writing (1986)

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FEEDBACK FORM

DEVELOPING LITERACY: GRADES 4-6 AND BEYOND

The New Jersey State Department of Education would appreciate your response after you review this resource book. Please answer the questions below, and make any other comment you consider important. Wherever possible give examples. Your response will be most welcome.

Your Position: _____ Current Grade Level(s) _____

Years in Teaching _____ Highest Degree _____ Certification _____

A. What use, if any, have you made of the approaches described in this resource book in your classroom teaching?

B. In particular, how has or might the approaches of this resource book affect your ways of responding to student writing?

C. How do you think this resource book could be improved?

D. What additional information or materials might help you relate the approach to your teaching?

E. What follow-up workshop session(s) organized around this resource book would be most effective for you?

F. How and with whom have you shared this resource book within your district?

G. Other observations and remarks:

(Optional)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Please return this feedback sheet to your RCSU workshop leader or mail to:

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